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POEMS



CLARIBEL

AND

OTHER POEMS



BY

W. J. LINTON

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.

1865.

280. k. 49.


JOHN HAMER, PRINTER,
LEEDS.



TO
WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

(PAINTER AND POET)

I dedicate this selection from an Artist's Poems
(published and unpublished) of which some of the
earliest were written nearly as far back as the
beginning of our friendship, twenty-five years ago.

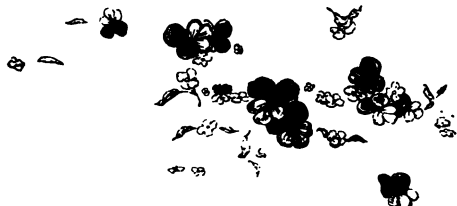


W. J. LINTON.

BRANTWOOD,

December, 1864.





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The Engravings drawn and cut on wood by the Author.



To my friend CHARLES WELLS—the Author of that most noble dramatic Poem *Joseph and his Brethren*—I owe the story of *Claribel*; and not only the story, but also numerous passages (in the first, second, and fifth scenes of the second act), of which I have done little more than adapt the measure.

W. J. L.

CLARIBEL
OR
LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

IN TWO ACTS

B

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

BOLESLAUS, King of Bohemia

CASIMIR, Prince of Poland }
ALBERT, a Page } The Friends

CLARIBEL the King's Daughter

RUDOLPH and other Princes, Suitors for the hand of Claribel

A Courtier

Knights, Ladies, and Attendants.





CLARIBEL

ACT I — SCENE I.

The Court-yard of the Palace.

A flourish of horns. Boleslaus and his Knights and Guests returning from the chase, with Servants carrying a deer. Then follow some Huntsmen.

FIRST HUNTSMAN

IT was the prince who kill'd him.

SECOND HUNTSMAN

You are wrong:

Lord Albert gave him his death-wound— I heard
Prince Casimir himself tell how it was.

FIRST HUNTSMAN

Perhaps so: but he ever crowns his friend
With the first garland. They were close enough
For such an error.

SECOND HUNTSMAN

You are wrong again.

Not half so readily the prince resigns
His honours, even to him.

THIRD HUNTSMAN


There's truth in that:
Or else the page does with him as he will.

FOURTH HUNTSMAN

How long has he been favourite?

SECOND HUNTSMAN

They were friends
Even in their boyhood,—since your Casimir
First visited our court,—sworn friends: the prince
Would have none else for his companion.
They rode together, hunted, swam, and fought,
And studied; none e'er saw them separate.
When Albert was advanced to be the page
Of our young princess, your prince Casimir
Was jealous, as a girl, that he must lose
Some hours of him. And in her turn the girl—
The lady Claribel—grew just as fond;
And pined when he must leave her for the wars.
There he'd the hap to save the prince's life;
And so was knighted, and strode on apace
To closer friendship,—'faith, 'tis well deserved:



For there's none braver or more mannerly,
More true or kind in speech, nor one who bears
Himself more nobly, though not nobly born.
But all the same he is our lady's page :
She will not part with him. When your young lord
Left us, some months since—— See, where come the
friends,
Holding themselves aloof from all the rest.

Enter Casimir and Albert.

ALBERT

You have not told me yet what lucky chance
Gladdens Bohemia with your step again.

CASIMIR

No chance, my friend ! you have expected me.

ALBERT

Yes ! but so long, that expectation fell
Into disfavour, for a lying slave
That brought false messages of your return.
Why left you us ?

CASIMIR

Well, you shall know the cause
Both of my leaving and of my return.
I was impatient of the company
Of these same wooing princes who have throng'd

So many months past your Bohemian court
With idle supplications. I was vex'd
To see them buzzing round the princess' ears.
I had grown up beside her till it seem'd
That she belong'd to me. And when they came
To interfere, 'twas an impertinence
That gall'd me till I could not, even to you,
Own my annoyance. So I left them here,
Trusting my deeds might well outvoice their words
In her dear estimation.— You are hurt
That I kept this so secret?

ALBERT

Hurt at that!

CASIMIR

Why then this change of countenance? Your face
Is mapp'd with hostile lines. What moves you so?

ALBERT


I fear this love may sunder us.

CASIMIR

My friend!—
Should it not draw us closer, thee and me?

ALBERT

It shall. Forgive me for a moment's doubt.



Enter an Attendant.

ATTENDANT (*to Albert*)

The princess has been asking for you, sir !

CASIMIR

Put off your fears ; nothing can harm our loves.

ALBERT

I will be sure of it.

CASIMIR

Be here again

Quickly.

ALBERT

Ay ! presently.

CASIMIR

I'll stay for you.



ACT I — SCENE II.

*The Princess' Chamber.**Claribel reading; a Lady waiting. Enter Albert.*

ALBERT

Your highness sent for me.

CLARIBEL

In truth I did ;

But have forgot my purpose.

ALBERT

May I wait

Till you recall it ?

CLARIBEL

That would be for ever.

How have you pass'd the morning ?

ALBERT

With the prince.

CLARIBEL

You have been hunting with him : is 't not so ?

ALBERT

I will forswear it, if it be your will.

CLARIBEL

Nay : I'd be wrong, to either step between
You and your friend or stay your arm from deeds
Of manly daring. I must blush to own
A woman's may-be foolish timorousness ;
And you are over-rash. You love the chase
(Confess the truth !) more than all joys on earth
Save Casimir's friendship.

ALBERT

Madam ! one thing more.

CLARIBEL

And that, best-loved ?

ALBERT

My duty next your grace.

CLARIBEL

Is 't that weighs down your brows so heavily ?

ALBERT

Nay, madam, 'tis the light that dazzles me.

CLARIBEL

Your love is light, then.

[*To her Attendant*] Go, fetch me my lute !—
I will sing some low song shall charm away
Your sorrow with its plaintive melody.

I did not deem that love should make men sad.
My father's court is throng'd with lovers, fair
As summer butterflies,—as careless too.
Methinks a gayer, goodlier company
Is rarely met with. But perchance your love
Is of another hue?

ALBERT

The self-same hue,
Yet somewhat differing.

CLARIBEL

Differing:—ha! I see,—
You and your mistress. Trust me, if 'tis so,
You love unworthily: for I know none
So high may bar your suit. Some arrogant girl
Who thinks a peerless knight not noble enough.

ALBERT


No! no! there is no arrogance but mine:
If hopeless reverence can be arrogant.

CLARIBEL

You are too diffident. Dare you confide
Your love to me, that I may plead with her?
I'll guess who it may be. How high is she?

ALBERT

Madam! about your height.



CLARIBEL

About :— And fair ?

ALBERT

Fair as Bohemia's Fairest, as the dawn
Of the first, brightest spring; as fair as Hope,
Could Hope be the Belovéd. Fair as thou.

CLARIBEL

If it be not some page's courtly tone,
Or cunningest gloss, to me you would address
Your nameless praise. I am not vain enough
To answer— I deserve it. What heart-words
May echo——

ALBERT

Lady ! if transparent speech
Display'd my soul's depth, giving back yourself
To your own gaze :— In the name of loyalty,
My most aspiring thought hath ne'er displaced,
Yet credit this— I have not earn'd your scorn.

CLARIBEL

My scorn !

ALBERT

O Beautiful ! thy very pride
Looks angel-like: yet wrongs me—— Let me speak !
True heart-devotion, ne'er so meanly born,

Is homage worthy of a queen's regard ;
The lowliest truth would kiss her raiment-hem
Too noble for her trampling. I am paid
With your most distant smile for my best worth ;
But even my humblest love is no fit slave
For your disdain.

CLARIBEL (*looking in his face*)

Albert!

ALBERT

My eyes are dim.

CLARIBEL (*kissing his eyelids*)

Canst thou see clearly now? Nay, do not kneel !
Rise to the full height of thy worthiness,
That my glad soul may look up into thine,
My royalest knight! How couldst thou ever doubt?
What! scorn of thee?

ALBERT

My life stands giddily
Upon the sunniest peak of happiness.
Let me hold fast thy hand.

CLARIBEL

For ever, love!

ALBERT

My Princess !



ATTENDANT (*returning*)

Madam! you desired me fetch
Your highness' lute. There is a broken string.

CLARIBEL

No matter! Leave us now!— My song is sung.

ALBERT

Yet sing again!

CLARIBEL

If thou wilt sing with me.

ACT I — SCENE III.

A Room of State in the Palace.

*Boleslaus on his throne; Claribel seated at his feet; the
Princes standing in front; Knights, Ladies, and Atten-
dants around.*

BOLESLAUS

We wait your slow decision, Claribel!
These princes now have sojourn'd in our court
Full time enough for the most fickle eyes
To make election: difficult at first,
Where all are worthy; but a woman's wit

And ready apprehension can not fail
To note ere long some difference of port,
Or manner, or behaviour, which may help
Her certain choice. Which of these lords shall be
Your husband, heir unto Bohemia's crown?

CLARIBEL

May I be free to speak?

BOLESLAUS

Speak as thou wilt!

CLARIBEL

Then, good my lord! my choice doth light on none.

BOLESLAUS


Thou hast no choice 'mong all these gentlemen?
What then?

CLARIBEL

I would not wed with either, sir!
I speak it not of mere maid bashfulness,
Nor frowardly contemning princely worth,—
Albeit not for my purchase while my heart
Hath no response. My answer is but this—
I can not choose to wed unless I love.

BOLESLAUS

Then we must choose for thee. Shall it be said



King Boleslaus has play'd with welcomed guests !
Yet, Princes ! speak to her. Your smother tones
May charm this waywardness. We little like
To have our purposes so set at nought.

PRINCE RUDOLPH

Princess ! I pray you to allow my suit.
A jewel should be worn and well display'd,
Not hidden away : and thou a priceless one
With thy rich dower of beauty. For the love
Hath so long knit our houses, let me bind
Our realms in one dear hope, thy hand in mine.

CLARIBEL

Prince Rudolph loves the jewel set in gold.
It is Bohemia's daughter he would wed :
And as Bohemia's daughter I reply—
I am too proud to be his hand-maiden,
Even to place the jewel in his cap.

ANOTHER OF THE PRINCES

Lady ! beseech thee let my passion move
Thy virgin coldness. Not Bohemia's round
Of golden glory, but the sunny light
Of all perfections circling thy bright self,
Hath warm'd my heart. My life will worship thee
With utmost patience, let thy sweet spring smile
Shine on me through this winterly contempt.

CLARIBEL

Let that same patience ask another spring !
I do not warm to thee. Thy sunniest speech
Thaws not the ice between us. I am fix'd
In my first resolution.

ANOTHER OF THE PRINCES

Yet relent.

Set me, dear princess ! to some arduous task
Whose prize may be thy favour. Let me wear
Thy glove, even as a promise, on my helm.


CLARIBEL

Is then thy courage all so dull to need
The spur of a poor guerdon ? Dost hold back
From nobleness until thou hear'st the price ?
My father's daughter is not yet for sale,
Though honour bid.

CASIMIR

Belovéd Claribel !

Refuse me not, for this : While these have sought
Thy favour with word-wooing, I have cared
Rather to let the echo of brave deeds
Reach thee from far and whisper my desert
Than strive to please thine eyes, reflecting back
From my unstained armour the glad sheen
Of thy most radiant presence, or to mix



My words in this midsummer melody.
If Fame has spoken for me, may thy voice,
Sweeter than Fame's, approve her plea and mine.

CLARIBEL

Prince Casimir! I should dispraise your worth
By scornful words. I fear my speech has err'd
From courtesy toward these gentlemen:
Yet I would not condemn their dear regards.
Truly I thank them that they so affect
Bohemia's daughter. My acknowledgment
Will heal, I hope, such wounds as I have made.
You too I thank, sir! for your kindly thoughts;
Which I am all too poor to render back
With the sole rendering you could well accept.
Too poor, for that my heart has been and is
Unsway'd by love toward you. I beseech,
Of you and all these lords, construction clear
Of my most simple words: I do esteem
Your several worths, but none of you I love
As she should love who would be royal wife.
By your own truths, I pray, believe me now.
I do not falter.

BOLESLAUS

Stay! this shall not be.
We may not have our policy so cross'd

By girlish whimsies. Thou shalt wed perforce.
 But not to make election blindfolded,
 To-morrow we will hold a tournament;
 And there thou shalt adjudge thyself as prize
 To him who best deserves.—Nay, answer not.
 Princes! we wish that we had girls enough
 To wive you all; so none might leave our court
 Unsatisfied. But since that may not be,
 We pray you hold our loves of equal weight;
 Nor blame our care that only one can gain.
 To-morrow shall proclaim Bohemia's heir.
 We leave you to the tending of your hopes.

Exit with Claribel and Train, the Princes following.

As they go out

PRINCE RUDOLPH (*to Casimir*)

You look not in discarded mood, my lord!

CASIMIR

Why should I, when to-morrow will amend
 To-day's deferral? [*Casimir and Albert remain.*]

Albert! look at him.

'Faith, he's as sad as if king Boleslaus
 Himself had stamp'd refusal. Let him fear:
 For hope girds on my sword. Her hand is mine..

ALBERT

Whether she will or no?



CASIMIR

A woman's No.

But thou hast heard. She has not made a choice:
Save that her words to me were gentler-toned.
I quarrel not with that. My way is clear.
She bids me write the Yes with my own hand.
Shall I not snatch her from this summer swarm?

ALBERT

But if she yet should choose; and if her choice
Should be another?

CASIMIR

Think'st thou I would yield?
Yield her whose love is more than life to me:
For I'd not live without her.

ALBERT

Would'st thou wrong
The gentle love which never may be forced?
Would'st savagely o'ermaster the Adored?
Or claim her heart even if it gave not back
One pulse to thine?

CASIMIR

If! if!— My doubtful friend!
Thou hast never loved, or thou would'st know that ifs
Are meaningless. My mortal enemy

I'd grasp with ungloved peace ere I would back
One step out of the path toward my love,
Even for my brother and most dearest friend.
Let them beware!— for I or the other side,
Though ne'er so many, in to-morrow's lists
Shall look our last on her. Her hand is mine.

ACT I—SCENE IV.

A Hall in the Palace.

Retainers lounging about: some cleaning armour, some drinking.

FIRST RETAINER

I'll wager you prince Rudolph is the man.

SECOND RETAINER

Not he, but our prince Casimir.

THIRD RETAINER

I'll hold

My master wins.

FOURTH RETAINER

Or mine.

FIFTH RETAINER (*from table where some are drinking*)

But which is he

The princess most affects?

FIRST RETAINER

Why, none, she says.

FOURTH RETAINER

Ay, says: a woman always says her No.

That's good Bohemian for 'I thank you, sir!'

[*To one of the Princess' Attendants passing*]

Is it not? girl!—Where runnest thou? We'll have
A match at last. Shall it be a double one?

GIRL

No fear of that: no king will father me.

Was I my lady, I would take the veil

Rather than marry any against my will.

FOURTH RETAINER

You'll never have the chance.

GIRL

Why not? sir Squire!

FOURTH RETAINER

Because you'd not be able to say No.

GIRL

Try me!

FOURTH RETAINER

That's Yes,—and Yes beforehand too.

He attempts to kiss her.

GIRL

Keep off!

FOURTH RETAINER

But truly, if a woman can,
Say, do you think the princess mean'd her No?

GIRL

What's that to you?

FOURTH RETAINER

Nay, what a mood you're in.
I did not go to offend you.

SECOND RETAINER

Let her be!

But tell us, do you think your mistress cares
For none of our young princes?

GIRL

'Troth, not I,

Unless prince Casimir.

SECOND RETAINER

He's worthy her.

Yet I know one more princely to my mind
Even than he.

GIRL

Who then?

SECOND RETAINER

Your lady's page.

He's kinder; has a gentler way with him;
Nor any upstart pride.

FIFTH RETAINER

He's proud enough
With the king's knights.

SECOND RETAINER

That's true. But not with us.

FIFTH RETAINER

Then he's one of us.

GIRL (*passing on*)

Well, I can't stay here
Idling with you. A set of gossiping knaves!

SIXTH RETAINER (*at the table*)

Here's to the winner!

FIFTH RETAINER

You pledge warily.

SIXTH RETAINER

I am a courtier.

FIFTH RETAINER

Where may you have learn'd

State policy?

SIXTH RETAINER

The school is not far off;

Nor hard to find: under the palace-eaves.

SEVENTH RETAINER

I like not this rough wooing. What say you?

EIGHTH RETAINER

It bodes no good.

FIFTH RETAINER

Tush, man! what would you do?


Girls must be married. Who should choose for them
If not their fathers?

A PAGE

Or if not themselves?

FIFTH RETAINER

Ha! so you boys may fancy,—always wise
In your own mad conceits. A likely judge
Your inexperience.



PAGE

Well, I would not have
My father choose for me; nor take a wife
Whose only Yes came from her father's mouth.
Does it follow that my father's suit fits me?

SEVENTH RETAINER

The boy's not wide o' the mark; though it is well
To have a father's sanction. I ne'er knew
That a forced marriage came to any speed.
I heard, the king, after he left the lords,
Had harsh words with his daughter. He's quick-
tongued.

EIGHTH RETAINER

And hasty in his will too. What he says
Is done on the spur o' the moment. Well, I hope
Prince Casimir may win her.

PAGE

So do I.

NINTH RETAINER (*entering*)

Prince Rudolph even now is taking leave.

PAGE

He will not risk the fight.

SIXTH RETAINER

I'm of his mind.

A broken pate's a sorry wedding gift.
I'd rather keep mine whole, though I was sure
To have a crown for plaster.

FIFTH RETAINER

Will you pledge
The winner now?

SIXTH RETAINER

I'll pledge you any way.

FIFTH RETAINER

Here's a safe journey to you.

SIXTH RETAINER

And to you,
Fair weather for your wedding.

NINTH RETAINER

Come! the prince
Has call'd for us.

SIXTH RETAINER

I'm with you.

SEVENTH RETAINER

It looks black:
There'll be a storm by the morrow.

PAGE

Do you hear
How the wind moans? Was not that lightning too,
Over the royal chamber? There, again!

END OF ACT I.

Between the Acts a Tournament.





ACT II — SCENE I.

A Garden of the Palace.

*Albert pacing to and fro. The clash of swords outside;
then a flourish of trumpets. Enter a Courtier.*

COURTIER

PRINCE Casimir is victor.

ALBERT

My brave friend !—

My more than friend !—

COURTIER

Ah, sir ! but you have miss'd

The crown o' the tourney. 'Twas a sight, i' faith,

Worth staying for. He'll be a worthy lord

To our else peerless lady. He will wear

Bohemia's glories proudly as he wore

The eagle on his helm, that seem'd to say—

'I clutch the world from all.'— But you are dull :

I thought your joy would kindle at his triumph,—

Knowing how much the prince affects——

ALBERT

I wait

Your story, sir!

COURTIER

(Forefend his pageship's spleen!

'Tis something to be friended by a prince,
And heir-presumptive. He has hid himself
In dudgeon that he might not cross the lists
And win a hole in his head, to loose his pride.)— *Aside.*
I shall have pleasure tracing, sir! for you
The course o' the strife: for 'twas, upon my soul,
More like a battle vow'd unto the death
Than a mere jousting,— even for such a prize—
A princess and a crown. You should have seen
Prince Casimir approach, with eyes downcast,
To kiss the princess' hand ; you would have thought
Some pilgrim met a Cross in the wilderness,—
He bow'd such adoration, and so held
Her white hand in his touch. But when he rose,
'Twas plain to read the victory in his face.
I would not have encounter'd such a lip,—
Like Fate exultant. I'd have sworn each step
Was over an enemy. So, one by one,
He met and slew the combatants: not one
Had power to make him halt. 'Twas summer play,—
A thunder-storm,— they had no chance with him:

Though they fought gallantly. And our good king
Sate smiling; and the lady Claribel——

ALBERT

Sate smiling too!

COURTIER

No, sir! she sate as scared.

You see she is not like some dames of ours
Who love to look upon our manly sports.
She is almost too gentle for a queen.
Give me a lady whose regard can track
A brave man's deeds, nor flinch to see him win.
For my part——

ALBERT

Sir! I thank you; I have heard.

I pray you leave me.

COURTIER

Sir! at your command.

(He seeks some prompt preferment from the Prince:
Perhaps to be the new king's chamberlain.
I'll travel in his shadow.)— *Aside and Exit.*

Enter Claribel.

CLARIBEL

My dear lord!

ALBERT

My wife!— O, dearest! what a chance is ours.

How shall I slay my friend? how crush the bloom
Of that most noble nature? Yet I find
No other remedy.

CLARIBEL

O, dearest love!

Do not ally with wrong to heap more woe.
Rather shake hands with Fate to our own loss,
Paying her forfeit with atonement calm,
Unless it be through breach of our true faith.
Ah me! I have no guess of what to urge.
The king my father chafes at the least delay:
And even now the hand of Casimir
Twines in my hair, and his lips seize on mine,—
As sealing his possession. My quick sire
Chides me that I sit sad and silently;
Rating me as unduteous, that I make
No cheer to meet my bridegroom.

ALBERT

He must die.

By heaven, what is this man that he should dare
O'erstride the threshold of my love? A prince!
What's that? A chance. Mine eyes, that front his
brow,
See there no natural mark of mastership;
My blood bounds to the full as free a tide;
My soul is robed as royally as his.

A chance! a chance succession! he hath won
 A tourney,—slain some swordsmen. I would fast
 Three days, not seeing thee, and take his life
 Despite his strength of birth. That chance, which
 brought
 His lips so near to thine, shall bring his head
 Beneath our feet.

CLARIBEL (*taking his hands, and looking in his face*)

 Temper this passion, love!
 Is friendship then so slight that its green boughs,
 That harbour'd thee so many pleasant days,
 Can all be stripp'd before one wintry gust,—
 Its fragrant blossoms all so soon forgot?
 It makes Love shudder, friend! You will not bring
 That dull ape, Jealousy, into our home,
 Among your noble thoughts. Prince Casimir
 Treats me with delicacy, tenderly,
 In his respect. And even if friendship's nought,
 His nice behaviour may enforce some claim
 To gratitude.

ALBERT

 O, pure-soul'd! thou art right:
 My fierceness owns thy gentler potency.
 I will not, come what may, dishonour him.
 But how to meet this pass!

CLARIBEL

Your thought be swift!

This day he is to wed me,— as some Russ
Marries his captive, in his conqueror's garb,
Scarce having cleansed his armour.

ALBERT

(Light breaks there.)— *Aside*.

CLARIBEL

What say'st thou ? love !

ALBERT

Believe, nought shall be done
To hurt our dignity. But I'll be there,—
Even at the altar. Only trust in me.

CLARIBEL

Belovéd !



ACT II — SCENE II.

A tangled Forest. Albert waiting. Enter Casimir.

CASIMIR

Joy, joy, my brother! Albert! help thy friend
To bear his triumph. It is all too much.

ALBERT

It is. Thou canst not bear it.

CASIMIR

What mean you?
You are moved. What sorrow has invaded you?
Forgive me that I did not mark your grief,
So full of mine own bliss. What may it mean?

ALBERT

That I would bear thy triumph. Yes, my friend!
Since love and friendship are too great a load
Even for thy Atlas shoulders—— Let me speak!—
Therefore renounce thy love! thou canst not wed
Bohemia's daughter.

CASIMIR

Who would cross me there?

ALBERT

Thy friend.

CASIMIR

What friend? Thyself perhaps!

ALBERT

Even so.

CASIMIR

This is mere trifling. But for that clench'd lip
I should esteem you gamesome, scarce in tune
With a friend's earnestness :— but your harsh words
Unfriendlily apparel'd——

ALBERT

Do I wear

Your livery? sir!

CASIMIR

You overstep your place.

ALBERT

Yet I have been the brother of a prince.

CASIMIR

Brother and friend! you venture on my love.

ALBERT

No! you on mine.

CASIMIR

Again, what meaneth this?

You talk enigmas; let your meaning out:
For that sweet angel at the altar kneels,
Waiting to be my wife.

ALBERT

Then I am plain.
That angel never can be thine. Two claim
Precedence of thy title—I and Death.
The first may stumble, but the last is sure.
Alas! the shades of death have sweeter haunts
Than solitary life, or fulsome change
That leads but to a grave. Love's wings have flown
The circuit of the world, and find therein
Nought but the loving. So forswear thy hope!
Bridle thy lion-heart until it break!
Her marriage-bed is rather in the tomb
Than in thy arms. Do anything but hope!

CASIMIR

As yet I tamely answer thy appeal,
So overwhelming in its circumstance:
Not understanding how thy birth and rank
Should soar so giddily the eagle's height,
To thwart thy friend and rush between the troth
Of prince and princess, past a king's decree.

ALBERT

Open thy princely ears, then, to my cause!

I have been praised, lord Casimir; my form
And port been judged not servile; and mine eyes
Have overlook'd the haughtiest. I could stride
And grapple with a prince,— ay! with the best.
Though but a page, my fortune placed me near
A princess, and my soul was prince enough
To worship her perfection. As I watch'd
(The page's duty, sir!) her every mood,
I found her sad when I look'd seriously,—
Gay when my thoughts made merry,— when I sought
The lists she paled; and once her glance met mine,
And lit me to the chamber of her heart,
Wherein I saw my image dearly throned;
And ere conceit could lend ambition words
Her love stoop'd like a tame bird to my breast,—
Where I must cherish it. And, to be brief,
Know we are married— close as nature's law
Of holiest sympathy can bind two lives.
Therefore I bid thee to respect my wife,
As a true gentleman; or else affront
My honour with thy sword.

CASIMIR

I meet thy sword,
Less deadly sharp than thy injurious words
That flame-like bar my Eden. Out, alas!

O Claribel ! O Queen ! what cursed blot
Hath fallen upon my 'scutcheon ? I, a prince,
On the top step of a throne, to be hurl'd down
By common hands ; and my imperial globe—
Thy perfect love— torn rudely from my grasp !
O shame ! O shame !— Unsay thy traitorous speech :
Some fiend possesses thee.

ALBERT

No fiend but Love.
Thy cross-hilt can not exorcize my life.

CASIMIR

My sword-point shall ; or thou step o'er my corse.
I will compel her image from thy heart.—
By our old friendship, tell me thou hast lied !

ALBERT

No lie, but truth.

CASIMIR

Then one of us must die.

ALBERT

Therefore I sent for thee. For I, my prince !
Would have thy armour, wherein I must wed
The lady Claribel. Beware thyself !
For I will hunt thee for thy beauteous hide.
Be brief ! She waits my presence with the spoil.

ACT II — SCENE III.

A Room of State in the Palace.

King Boleslaus on his throne; Knights, Ladies, and Attendants standing around; Claribel kneeling at an altar in the midst.

Song of Girls outside.

Blessed Hours! approach her gently;
Peace! smile on her excellently;
Midnight Stars! attend her pleasure.
 Veil thy splendour, Night!
Not even Love's own eyes should measure
 Love's delight.

Touch life's chords with lightest finger;
Echoes sweet! around her linger;
By the love makes marriage holy,
 Tame thy carriage, Fate!
Like a bridesmaid murmuring lowly—
 Yet we wait.

BOLESLAUS

Where is the prince our son?

A KNIGHT

He comes, my lord!

Enter One in Casimir's armour and followed by his train of Knights. He bows to the King, and advances to the Princess, who has risen and is looking anxiously around. He takes her hand.

My Beautiful !

BOLESLAUS

We look'd for Albert here :

He is not with thy knights.

[*To an Attendant*] Go, seek for him !

He seems of late less mirthful than his wont.

But his tried faith nor yet his double love

Holds him excused from this our festival.

ONE IN CASIMIR'S ARMOUR.

My lord ! I left him some few minutes since,—

The cause of my delay. He pray'd your grace,

Through me, that he might have some days of leave

On his most urgent business. I was bold

To answer for your majesty.

[*To Claribel*] My wife !


BOLESLAUS

Well, well ! but we are loath to miss his face,

That shone so close to us.

AN ATTENDANT (*entering hurriedly*)

My lord ! your page—



BOLESLAUS

What means that sorrowful visage ?

ATTENDANT

Good my lord !

Forget my sad look in its sorrowful cause.

Your page is murder'd.

ONE IN CASIMIR'S ARMOUR (*to Claribel*)

'Tis some error, love !

Trust me, it is.

ATTENDANT

In the royal forest, sire !

Not half a league from here :— It was his dog
That led us there, who made us follow him
Until we came where underneath a tree,
Hid in the brake, we found the murder'd man ;
Reclining as asleep, with a green bough
Drawn tenderly to shield him from the sun.
We thought he slept : but a great pool of blood
Was at his side,— the point of his broken sword
Lay near, in blood,— and some ten paces off
The red, moss'd earth was trampled hard and wet,
As he had fought a long and desperate fight.

BOLESLAUS

He was not dead ?

ATTENDANT

He had his vizor close ;
They loosed it as I turn'd away, in haste
To bring the heavy tidings.

SOME LADIES

Help there ! help !

The Princess faints.

ONE IN CASIMIR'S ARMOUR

She needeth air. Myself will bear her out.

He carries her out.

BOLESLAUS (*to a Second Attendant entering*)

He is not dead ?

SECOND ATTENDANT

Alas ! quite dead, my lord !

BOLESLAUS

Poor Albert ! some one envied thee our love.
Search out the villains ! he shall be revenged.

SECOND ATTENDANT

It is the prince, my liege ! prince Casimir
Is murder'd,— not the page : we were deceived.

BOLESLAUS (*pointing to the altar*)

Who was it, then, stood there ? [*A long pause.*]
Will no one speak ?

COURTIER

My liege ! if I may venture to be heard——

BOLESLAUS .

Speak, speak !

COURTIER

Sire ! I have lately taken note
Of sundry passages of favour given
By your most gracious daughter——

BOLESLAUS

Unto whom ?

Say quickly !

COURTIER

To lord Albert.

BOLESLAUS (*striking him*)

Lying slave !—

Who was it that stood there ?

A THIRD ATTENDANT (*entering hurriedly*)

My lord ! your page—

BOLESLAUS (*turning fiercely on him*)

'Tis false.

THIRD ATTENDANT

Your pardon, sire !

BOLESLAUS

What wouldst thou say ?

THIRD ATTENDANT

I crave your patience, sire ! Scarce ere I came
 Into your presence, on his favourite horse—
 The one the princess gave him, his drawn sword
 Beating down all opposal, he flew through
 The palace gates.

BOLESLAUS

Say who !

THIRD ATTENDANT

Lord Albert, sire !
 The princess borne before him.

BOLESLAUS

Get thee hence !—
 Who follows him ?— His own reward to him
 Who drags them to our feet, alive or dead !

The Song, repeated outside, is heard faintly.

By the love makes marriage holy—

*The Song dies away ; the wind brings back only the last
 words—*

Yet we wait !

All pause, then exeunt in confusion.

ACT II — SCENE IV.

An Antechamber in the Palace. Enter two Attendants, meeting.

FIRST ATTENDANT

Where is the king?

SECOND ATTENDANT

You bring him news of them?

FIRST ATTENDANT

Yes, yes ! but let me pass.

SECOND ATTENDANT

They're taken, then?

Nay, tell me all, and then I'll lead you straight
Into the presence.

FIRST ATTENDANT

Well, I am the first

By far : so it does not matter. They are safe.

SECOND ATTENDANT

Where did you find them?

FIRST ATTENDANT

Some few miles away.

We miss'd them once,— but found their track again
By blood upon the ground.

SECOND ATTENDANT

He had spurr'd hard.

FIRST ATTENDANT

It was his own. No doubt the friends had fought
Like desperate fiends,— they were most nearly match'd.
It seems his wounds had burst again, and bled
Till he grew faint, so that at last he fell
From off his horse ; and when our troop came up
The princess was endeavouring to raise
His body— for he seem'd to be near dead—
Into the saddle ; and the good horse knelt,
As he would help her. 'Twas a piteous sight.
There was not even a tear on her white face.
But for the king's reward not one of us
Had dared to bring them back. She made us weep
Though she spoke not a word, even when we took
Her lover from her arms. We laid him down
Gently upon some boughs : 'twas a kind youth ;
We all of us had loved him. He ne'er winced
The while we bore him ; but still smiled on her,
Just as a mother smiles on a sick child ;
And she walk'd by him with his hand in hers,
Keeping her eyes on his ; and the good horse
Follow'd them almost like a funeral friend,
As if he knew their sorrow.

SECOND ATTENDANT

'Faith, 'tis sad.

FIRST ATTENDANT

Ah ! 'twas a bad deed, friend ! to kill the prince.
But let me go !

SECOND ATTENDANT

This way ! the king is here.

ACT II — SCENE V.*A Room of State as before.**Boleslaus on his throne, surrounded by his court; Claribel standing before him.*

BOLESLAUS

Who would have children ? Look, my lords ! to yours ;
Use whips, not kisses ; bring them up with fear,
Not love : or they'll grow wanton, and play tricks
In the public gaze, shaming your whitest hairs.
Keep them more strict, my lords !— Thou shameless
girl !

To slide, so reptile-like, from kingly arms
Unto this slave, this groom, this serving-man.
Answer me,— how did he beguile thy heart,

To make thee lose thy honour?— But, not yet :
Say he has spared that. Tell me he has done
Some glorious deed, some service of great price
In secret peril which we dream'd not of.
Say yes ! and yet we'll give him half our realm.

CLARIBEL

I know no service— nothing but our love.
For that I am his wife.

BOLESLAUS

O wretched slave !
Base, groveling, meanly-choosing,— when thine eyes
Were train'd to the highest. Tell me, haggard ! how
He lured thee from thy dignity.

CLARIBEL

My lord !

It is your words alone that taint our state.—
I pray you hear me. Though my doom was fix'd
Before you spoke.— My father ! it was you
Who chose this gentleman you now revile,
From your whole court. That he was worthy, sir !
Be witness his advancement by yourself.—
I plead not to extenuate a fault,
But justifying truth.— I saw him brave,
Noble, and lovely ; my own sight confirm'd
Your praise and fame's reporting. But I look'd

With woman's eyes, and saw beneath all this
A soul that beat in unison with mine,—
In brief, sir ! that fine sympathy which weds
The loving, be their different states most wide,—
Which ever draws the one to the other's side
Past all convention or world hinderance.
True love is nature without baulk of fear :
Hast thou a law to bind our natures ? sir !
I loved him for he was a gentleman,—
A king can be no more ; and that I found
His soul as royal as my own.— O, more :
For I look'd reverently to thee, Belovéd !
Up to thy royalty.— You would have given
My hand unto prince Casimir, a true
And kingly man,— my husband's friend— not more.
Witness how dearly Albert prized my love,—
To slay his friend whom he loved more than self.
Alas, my lord ! love will not brook defeat ;
Nor is there true election but the heart's.—
I pray thee, let the past be strown with peace,
And that thou recollect I am thy child,
Thy only child, the heir unto thy love.
Let not blind wrath usurp my heritage !—
For us, our life is one,— our life or death.

BOLESLAUS

My ears are stopp'd.— Bring in this gentleman !

E

[The dead body of Albert is brought in on a litter of green boughs.]

Lo, thy Dishonour goeth to its grave.
 Hide thou close in thy chamber till thou hast sense
 To weed thy heart. Till then,—till thou art clear,—
 I have no daughter—none!—O Claribel!

Claribel looks sadly on her father,—then quietly approaches the couch of Albert.

CLARIBEL

My gentlest! thou art gone: I haste to thee.
She embraces him.

BOLESLAUS

Raise her!

[None move. He comes down from his throne and endeavours to lift her from the body.]

Look up!—My daughter!

ONE OF THE COURT

She is dead.



THREE ENGLISHMEN

KING ALFRED
SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE
HARRY MARTEN



THREE ENGLISHMEN

KING ALFRED

WHAT need more seeming dire than Alfred's was,
Fleeing from Chippenham that winter night?
Poor comfort found he in the woods and fens.
In his sure heart alone might faith alight
To breathe and wait occasion for new strife.

The snow fell softly over Wiltshire downs—
Hiding the horse of chalk out there by Calne—
When Alfred, having hunted Guthrun north,
Sat down to keep the feast of Epiphany
Within his walls, secure from all molest.
The Danish cavalry came o'er the snow
With noiseless speed ; burst through the city gates,

And drove dismay through all the Saxon power
Or ever there was time to clutch a brand.
Right on the easy town that avalanche
Roll'd, whelming, crushing down the revelers ;
Only some few, half-arm'd, escaped in the dark,
Across the Avon, out to the dreary wilds.

Seven years had Alfred waged unresting war :
Nine battles in one year the king had fought.
For ever, as one swarm of Danes was crush'd,
New swarms rode in upon the ocean-wind :
Much as, when one essays to outtread a fire,
Fast as this flame expires, yon scattering sparks
Inflame quick embers in some other place.
Even so those hydra-natured pirates thrive.
Now all was ablaze again throughout the land :
Our first sea victories, Warham's promised peace,
And the late gain at Execestre,— all nought ;
Victorious Alfred a poor fugitive,
Counted as dead by both his foes and friends,
His friends dispersed— none daring look for him,
His wide realm narrow'd to a forest lair,
Nor power nor vantage-ground save in himself.

But whoso holds from God a steadfast will
May laugh in the teeth of the most gaunt Despair ;

Nay, even yoke that beast to pull the car
Of his triumphal course above the years.

Follow, light Hope!— thou armourer to a king—
The hero's steps,— through all the thicket depth
Of his long hiding,— o'er the wild boar's track,
And the wide traces of the bounding deer ;
Follow him through his lonesome wanderings,
By moor and dark morass and tangled dell,—
Glad if somehow beside a swineherd's fire
His numb hands reinvigorate may trim
The arrows, once a terror to the Dane,
Now only used to bring the monarch's food.
Follow him day by day, night after night ;
Speak to him in his lone and cheerless dreams ;
Smile on his aimless path ; till, one by one,
He meets some loyal subjects of his worth,
And breaks a way through the thin-frozen sludge
To Ethelingay's Isle— one solid space
In the vast breadth of slough, where he may build
A refuge from the overrunning Dane,
A sanctuary for what few hopes survive—
Rekindling in them patriot energy.
Follow him, Hope ! tell him to bide his time.


There in his fastness, in the heart o' the waste,

The monarch and his little band abode;
Enduring hardest shifts of outlawry,—
The winged arrows for their pillowing,
And sunlight startling them with hostile glance,
Making swift forays or for food or news,
Snatching such scant subsistence as they could,
Inquiring where the Danes, where English souls,—
Until they heard how Alfred's old renown
Had stirr'd some few brave spirits in the land
To new achievement, and how Devon's Earl,
Besieged in Kinwith, fiercely sallying forth,
Had put to rout the Danish Hubba there
With mighty slaughter ;— then the king arose,
And loosed his banner, and his war-cry flew
Through all the English heavens, and men look'd up,
And flung their swords on high to hail the shout
Of ' Alfred once again for England's war !'
Who needeth tell what every child repeats ?
How as a harper 'mong the enemy
The daring monarch pass'd,— amused their sloth
With idle song beside their dissolute boards,
Spied out their weakness, caught them out of guard,
And paid them back the trick of former days.
The sun is yet scarce risen on Ethandune,
The pirate watchers nod o'er their debauch ;
At Egbert's stone by Selwood-side have met

The best of Wessex, Alfred at their head ;
Before that sun the fallen wine-cup gilds
The Avon shall be red with Danish blood
And Chippenham's surprize have like revenge.
Thereafter the Defeated wins his way
From strife to strife, a crowned conqueror :
Taming his former victors, trampling down
Invasion on invasion : not without
Disaster and due costs of high reward,—
A long and weary tale of restless days,
Fatigues innumerable, ceaseless cares,
Sometimes discomfiture and falling back,
And baffled hope, and work to be redone,
Zeal forced to drudge like the worst-burden'd slave,
And Courage with its armour never off,
And Speed ill-yoked unto unequal help :
A work like that of Sisyphus— to roll
The rock of sure success to heaven height.
For year by year the foemen seemed subdued,
Swore peace, departed, and again return'd.
But nought can stand against determined will,
Stronger than Fate. A ceaseless drip outwears
The granite : patient resolution so
Softens the stony heart of Destiny.
Though even the indomitable Hastings try
His subtilest sleights, and war, by genius led,

Put forth, Briareus-like, its hundred hands,
Striking the king on this side and on that,
Compelling his swift presence everywhere,
From Romney Marsh and Thames to Severn's mouth,
And from the southernmost cliffs to Chester walls,—
Though pestilence come in the invader's train,
And every form of difficulty strive '
To farther aid accomplish'd generalship,—
Though inward pain, even from his early years
Gnawing out strength, conspire against his life,—
Defeat on Alfred never more shall press.
For he had met it, and had overcome,
In every shade it knows, save one—despair :
And in that guise it dared not look on him.
So stalwart Truth at last was olive-crown'd.

And now in his old days the king hath peace ;
And the land rest,—its trust lain like a bride
Upon that royal heart, securely glad.
And he, who whilom at the swineherd's hearth .
Bore chiding for the lowliest neglect,
Now leads the nation with his puissant will—
As valourous in peace as erst in war,
Seateth bright Justice with him on his throne,
Foundeth great universities, and rules .
His own life with as scholarly discipline—



Making each hour his steward for good deeds.
He, who divided his last bit of bread
With some wayfarer, now sends costly gifts
Out of his treasury, to farthest Ind ;
His ships, with Victory's breath to swell their sails,
Full-freighted with his fame for many lands,
Bring back the homage of the first of earth ;
And from the heaven whereto his soul aspired
His glory beams on us along the years—
A star whose splendour may not be outshone.

Such is the life of Valour. It persists.
Its proud defiance answereth Defeat.
It tramples on despondency. It tholes
Under God's harrow ; bides ; and overcomes.
Why, the poor spider in Lord Robert's cell
Seven times repeats his foil'd endeavouring :
Shall Bruce do less ? Thence unto Bannockburn
Is but a journey, master'd step by step.
Rightly did Rome's great senate honour him
Who in his country's ruin slew despair.
Wait yet by Hope's lone altar, Poland ! wait.
To-morrow's sun will rise for all these tears.

That 'Isle of Nobles' to the mainland now
Is join'd. So to this isolated act

Of English worship let the continent
Of later worth adhere ! Till England be
An Isle of Nobles—the world's Athelney.

GRENVILLE'S LAST FIGHT

OUR ships lay under Florez. You will mind
'Twas three years after Effingham had chased
The Pope's Armada from our English side.
We had been cruizing in the Western Main,
Singeing some Spanish beards ; and now we lay,
Light-ballasted, with empty water-casks,
And half our crews disabled ; our six sail—
Beside two pinnaces and victuallers—
Pester'd and rommaging, all out of sorts.
My ship was Richard Grenville's, *The Revenge*.
They knew Sir Richard in the Spanish seas,
And told wild stories of him ; their brown dames
Frighted the babes with fancies of his deeds.
So hard-complexion'd was he (they would say)

That, when a health was drunk, he crush'd the glass
Between his teeth and swallow'd cup and all.
And then his blood-draughts.—Tush ! such idle tales !
We only knew a gallant gentleman
Who never turn'd his back on friend or foe.

Well, lying by Florez— as I told you now,
The Spanish force unlook'd for hove in sight :
A force of fifty-three great men-of-war.
Lord Thomas, taking note of their array,
Deeming it vain to grapple with such odds,
Signall'd his company to weigh or cut ;
And so all did except our Grenville's ship.
You see, we anchor'd nearest to the town,
And half our men were sick on shore. Beside,
Sir Richard never hurried from a fight.
We got our sick on board and safely stow'd
Upon the ballast ; and, that done, we weigh'd.
By this the Spaniard's on our weather-bow ;
And some would fain the captain should be led
To back his mainsail, cast about, and trust
Our sailing. Nothing of that mind was he.
He would not so— he said— for any fear
Disgrace his flag, his country, or himself ;
But pass their squadrons through despite of all,
Forcing the Seville ships to give him way.

And thus he did on divers of the first,
So— as we mariners say— they sprang their luff,
And fell under our lee. But windward bore
A huge high-cargéd ship— the Spaniards call'd
San Philip, took the breeze out of our sails,
And ran aboard us. Then, entangled so,
Four others, two upon our starboard bow,
And two on the larboard, up and boarded us.
We help'd San Philip from our lower tier,
And flung her back ; the other four closed in,—
Drove on us like so many hornet-nests,
Thinking their multitudes could swarm us down.
We brush'd them off and brush'd them off again.
The fight began at three o' the afternoon ;
And all the night through we kept up the game :
Darkening the stars and the full harvest-moon
With the incessant vomit of our smoke.
Ship after ship came on at our *Revenge*,
Ne'er less than two big galleons on her side,
Boarding her, as the tides wash up a rock,
To fall off broken and foaming 'mid the roar
Of their own thunder. They so ill approved
Our entertainment, that by break of day
They had lost appetite for new assaults :
And slunk far from us, like a ring of dogs
About a crippled lion, out of reach

Of daring that has taught them due respect,
Watching till his last agony spends itself.
Some fifteen of them grappled us in vain.
Two we had sunk, and finely maul'd the rest.
But, as day broaden'd out, it show'd our plight :
No sail in view— but the foes that hemm'd us round,
Save one of the pinnaces, which had hover'd near
To mark our chance, and now, like hare with hounds,
Was hunted by the Spaniards,— but escaped.
A bare one hundred men was our first count ;
And each slew his fifteen. But by this time
Our powder was all used, and not a pike
Left us unbroken. All our rigging spoil'd ;
Our masts gone by the side ; our upper works
Shatter'd to pieces ; and the ship herself
Began to settle slowly in the sea.
It was computed that eight hundred shot
Of great artillery had pierced through her sides.
Full forty of our men lay dead on deck ;
And blood enough, be sure, the living miss'd.
Sir Richard, badly hurt at the very first,
Would never stand aside till mid of dark :
When, as they dress'd his wounds, he was shot through,
The surgeon falling on him. Still he lived,—
Nor blench'd his courage when all hope was gone ;
But, as the morning wore, he call'd to him

The master-gunner, a most resolute man,
And bade him split and sink the unconquer'd ship,
Trusting God's mercy, leaving to the foe
Not even a plank to bear their victory.
What worth a few more hours of empty life,
To stint full-handed Death of English fame?

Brave Gentleman ! I think we had no heart
To sink so rare a treasure. Some of us
Were stiffening in our pain, and faintly cared
For loftier carriage ; cowards were there none ;
But so it was, that we among us chose
An honourable surrender,— the first time
Our captain's word refusing. I must own
The Spaniard bore him very handsomely.
Well-pleased he was to give us soldier terms
Rather than tempt the touch of our last throe ;
And courteously were the conditions kept.
The Spanish Admiral sent his own state-barge
To fetch our dying hero,— for our ship
Was marvellously unsavoury ; and round
The Southern warriors reverently throng'd
To look upon the mighty in his death :
So much his worth compell'd acknowledgment.
And well nigh a new battle had burst out
'Twixt the Biscayans and the Portugals,

Disputing which had boarded *The Revenge*.

For him, he bade them do even as they would
With his unvalued body. A few hours,
And Death bow'd down to crown him. Never sign
Of faintness show'd he ; but in Spanish said
These words, so they might be well heard by all.

' Here with a joyful and a quiet mind
I Richard Grenville die. My life is closed
As a good soldier's should be, who hath fought
For country's sake, and for his faith and fame.
Whereby from this body gladly parts my soul,
Leaving behind the everlasting name
Of a true soldier and right-valiant man
Who did the work that duty bade him do.'

When he had finish'd these and other words
Of such-like grandeur, he gave up the ghost
With stoutest courage. No man on his face
Could see the shade of any heaviness.
So He and Death went proudly on their way
Upon the errand of Almighty God ;
And God's smile was the gladness of that path.

And now immediately on this great fight

So terrible a tempest there ensued
As never any saw or heard the like.
Nigh on a hundred sail of merchantmen
Join'd their Armada when the fight was done,—
Rich Indian argosies. Of all the host
But thirty-two e'er reach'd a Spanish port.
Their men-of-war, so riddled by our shot,
Sank one by one ; and our *Revenge* herself,
Disdaining any foreign mastery,
Regarding else her captain's foil'd intent,
Went down, as soon as she was newly mann'd,
Under Saint Michael's Rocks, with all her crew.
The Spaniards said the Devil wrought their loss,
Helping the heretics. But we know well
How God stands by the true man in his work ;
And, if he helps not, surely will revenge
The boldly dutiful. My tale is done.

Sir Walter Raleigh— Grenville's cousin, he—
Has given the tale in fitter words than mine.
My story looks like shabby beggar's rags
About a hero. But you see the Man.
The diamond shines however meanly set.
Sir Walter laid his cloak before the Queen ;
But Grenville threw his life upon that deck
For Honour's Self to walk on. 'Twas well done.

For fifteen hours our hundred kept at bay
Ten thousand : one poor ship 'gainst fifty-three.
The Spaniard proved that day our English pith.
No new Armada on our cliffs shall look
While English Valour echoes Grenville's fame.

I have some strength left. I will hence to sail
With Master Davis. Home is very calm ;
But Honour rideth on the crested wave.


HARRY MARTEN'S DUNGEON THOUGHTS

THOU flowest, Stream ! beside old Chepstow's walls,
Hence to the Severn, and the Severn falls
To the wide ocean. I have ceased to flow.
And yet thou listenest to the stagnant Woe
That overhangs thy banks, like some vain weed
Rooted in Chepstow's hoariness. Indeed,—
Save that the veriest weed its hope may fling
Upon the winds, there as on certain wing

Borne to the mainland,— I but weed-like seem.

And yet my memory loves to watch the dream
Of Harry Marten's triumphs,— those brave days
When Vane outshone me with his steady rays,
When gravest Milton scorn'd not Harry's wit,
And fierce-will'd Cromwell had some heed of it ;
When we stood in the breach against the world,
And from his folly's wall the Stuart hurl'd
Into the tide of ruin. By this tower,
If all those glorious days were in my power,
I would not reconsider them again,
But shout my battle-song to the same high strain,
Take the same odds, the same gay daring strife,
And the same forfeit of a prison'd life
Past even the natural riddance of the grave.
Not for himself, O Freedom ! would thy knave
Ask some poor wages. Let my life be shent,
And this worn tomb be all my monument.

Dear Freedom ! have we vainly toil'd for thee ?
Our Rachel lost— and our apprentice-fee
This Leah, the Evil-favour'd. Shall I laugh,
Write on her lips my jesting epitaph,
And hug Misfortune for another term ?
Alas ! if hope might set the slowest germ



In these old chinks. But England's soil is dead
As Chepstow' stones. The blue sky overhead
Is all the prisoner's hope in these wall'd years.

I need not wet this dungeon-mould with tears ;
I will not tame my spirit to its cage ;
As little would I stoop me to assuage
Captivity with foolish querulousness.
And yet my courage mourneth nonetheless
Our ruin'd cause, and that nor sword nor voice
Of mine may lead the time to worthier choice :
While I rust here like a forgotten blade,
And Scot and Vane in bloody tombs are laid.
And yet not so, friend Scot !— thy better doom
To wait by God until new chance may bloom
Out of the barren land men call thy grave :
That England which thy virtues could not save,
Nor pious Vane lift heavenward from the slough.

For me hard penance but atoneth now
My many a youthful folly : though the worst
Left me a patriot. Wassails quench'd no thirst
For the full cup of England's liberty.
I never squander'd my great love for thee ;
And though men call me loose of life and speech,
There was no public act they could impeach,

And my loose tongue was first which dared to say
What hinderance 'twas stood in the nation's way.
Or loose or not, it wagg'd to no ill tune
Nor out of time. 'Troth, I'll forswear no boon
Of this frank life ; and now in living grave
Am thankful that I *had*. And that I *have* :
While memory traces back the flow of mirth,
From here where it is driven under earth—
As if the Wye had dived 'neath Chepstow's base.
God give the stream some outlet of his grace !—
There is some reach of joy in looking back
On the lost river's current. I can track
Its merry laughing gush among the reeds,
And how its rippings lipp'd the blossomy weeds
In shallow passages, its songful strife
Swift bounding o'er the rocks of active life,
And see again the glorious forms whose worth
Its sometime deeper water imaged forth.
No idle image was reflected there :
Not in the stream but on the rock I bear
The impress of the Gods who stood by me.
Nor was I all unmeriting to be
Their chosen companion. Arrows may hang loose :
The bowman yet be staunch and mind their use.

My England ! never one of all thy brave

Whose love o'erpass'd my love. I could be grave
Whene'er thy need required a solemn brow.
What was my task? To give thee room to grow :
To give thee sober freedom, godly growth :
Freedom and sanctifying worship : both.
Milton and Vane and Scot and I at one
Were in this work. And I am here alone.
And Milton in his darkness—— If he lives.

O English hearts ! are ye but Danaid sieves
Wherethrough like water noblest blood is pour'd ?
O English sense ! what is this word *Restored* ?
Restore Heroic Virtue, Holy Strength,
Now, Agonistes-like, through all the length
Of this great England prostrate ! Gyved you lie,
Mock'd at by Dalila, your Royalty.
I set this dungeon-gloom against the May
Of all your Restoration. I will say
Against it. I, a pleasure-loving man,
Place every pleasure under Honour's ban,
And bid you give your country life, and death,
Rather than foul the land with slavish breath.
Am I a prisoner ? Difference between
Chepstow and England is not much, I ween.
'Tis but a cell a few more paces wide.

Year after year, and under Chepstow' side
The muddied Wye still flows. My hair is grey ;
My old bones cramp'd ; my heart this many a day
O'erross'd with sorrow, like an ancient tomb.
Now the old man is harmless, he may roam
So far as falls the shadow of his jail.
Jail'd for his life. I have not learn'd to quail.

Thou askest me— ' Was it to do again ? ' .
I tell thee— Yes ! the tyrant should be slain.
Scot's word is mine : ' Not only was my hand
But my heart in it.' Here I take my stand ;
Nor twenty years of solitude can move
My conscience from its keep. And so this love,
Your pity proffer'd me, must be withdrawn ?
Well, Harry Marten never cared to fawn.
I am alone again, on my grave's edge.

And my long-suffering shall be as a wedge
To rive this tyranny. I climb thy height,
Old feudal fastness ! with my feeble might,
And see from thee, for all my age is dim,
The beautiful rich woods beyond the rim
Of Wye and Severn, and the meadows fair
Stretching into the distance ; and the air
Is charged with fragrance ; and the uncaged birds

Say blithely in the sun their liberal words,
Which yet shall wake the tillers of the ground.
And lo ! the harvestmen are gathering round
The banner of God. They put their sickles in ;
The day of a new trial doth begin.
Thou saidst aright, my Vane ! it had to be.
Nor jail nor scaffold stays futurity.

The twenty years have pass'd even as a mist ;
And now the dying prisoner's brow is kiss'd
By his old comrades : Hampden, Pym, and Vane,
Fairfax, and Scot, and Ludlow, Cromwell fain
To hide old scars and holding Milton's hand,
Bradshaw and Ireton : at my side they stand,
And the old cheerful smile illumines my cell.
'There is no death nor bondage : we, who dwell
In higher realms of faith, assure thee this.'—
Friends ! ye say sooth ; this cell no longer is
A prison ; England only is my bound,
This coward England all unworthy found.
Still you can smile.— 'The resurrection-morn
Riseth o'er England's grave ; and we forlorn
Shall be triumphant. Look thou forth and see
Our merry England, kingless, bold and free.
We have not lived, we have not died, for nought.
The victory we have lost shall yet be wrought :

We have not sown high deeds and hopes in vain.'

Bright lightning-flash of death ! speed through my
brain,

And sink into the grave my sacrifice :

A grave unhonour'd until England rise

To avenge the Regicide——

O Martyr Tomb !

Thou bear'st the seed of Triumph in thy womb.





THE BATTLE OF NEWBURY

(20th of September, 1643.)



THAT harvest night we lay in the fields, impatient
of the dark,
All eager for the trumpet's voice to rouse the slothful
lark ;
For the king had sent his challenge out to Essex and
the Right,
And Essex flung his answer back— We meet at morn-
ing's light.

O many a sleepless eye, be sure ! that night did watch
the stars,
Their silent marches following, so high above our jars ;
And many a thought might stoop toward the melan-
choly earth,
Whereto so soon we must return for all our martial
worth.

Even they might ponder in such sort— those reckless
cavaliers ;
And our raw troopers be forgiven for some unhardened
fears :
Not fears ! nathless we may be dull in the shadow of
the fray,
With brothers in the hostile camp, dead brothers ere
a day.

Now with the dawn King Charles' part on the hill-top
stand array'd,
Their ordnance planted, horse and foot in their bat-
talions made ;
And many of their captains brave have thrown their
doublets off,—
Not so intending battle-heat, but rather triumph-
scoff.

Charge up the hill !— Prince Rupert's horse have met
our first attack,
With mighty dint upon our force, the foremost pressing
back ;
The tide of our assault recoils, but the wave flows up
again,
Another, and another yet, the foremost to sustain.

Right fiercely Rupert's cavalry salute our city bands ;
But the blue-coat Londoners are staunch, their regiment firmly stands.

Repulsed, the horse wheel round again ; charge back,
and ours reply,—

Till they do not wheel but reel away from our sharp musketry.

And yet a third attempt they make, dashing in squadrons full,

Striving to break our serried ranks with valour masterful ;

But the bullet-cloud athwart them bursts, o'erthrowing man and horse.

Methinks they will not dare again repeat so warm a course.

On swiftly now ! Lord Essex leads ; his white hat is our guide,

One single wreath of snowy foam upon the ocean's pride.

On sharply ! drive them back once more ! on ! rally yet again !

Beat them from hedge to hedge until scarce two or three remain.

Meanwhile the fight holds otherwhere. A mile below
the hill

They have fallen on our rearmost guard : speed down
to check their will !

But we pause in mid career, till some the opponent
force have known ;

For they too wear the furze and broom we took to
mark our own.

Spur through the traitors !— Up again to Essex on
the brow !

Where the royal ordnance was at dawn our ordnance
climbeth now ;

One with another they dispute, 'gainst cannon cannon's
mouth,


As if the battle with the day but rose to sultrier
growth.

And ever the sturdy Londoners oppose the hottest
fray ;

Open to horse and ordnance both, 'gainst odds they
make their way ;

And overmatch'd with mightier odds yet stand
undauntedly :

The Rupert can not scatter them, they know not how
to fly.



Even as a grove of pines, that doth the tempest-rage
endure,
Their heads or branching arms may wave, they keep
their footing sure :
So these are firmly rooted there, or, only honour-
moved,
Step forward, gaining on the foe some vantage-ground
approved.

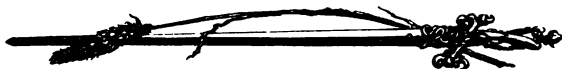
And so, till darkness sundered us. Yet neither host
withdrew ;
Only upon the hill's far side their horse safe distance
knew,
With the broken remnant of their foot gather'd behind
them there ;
Our men no less too wearied are to give them much of
care.

Another morning : we remain the masters of the
field.
They drew off in the night : their chief a broken hope
did wield.
We are marshall'd, ready ; none appear to the challenge
of our shot ;
One shout—for Newbury field is ours ! Prince
Rupert turneth not.

Four earls of Charles' part have fallen, and many
hundred more
Of English-hearted foemen whom their brother foes
deplore.
For either side like Englishmen did war with might
and main.
God send such mournful victory be needed ne'er again !

And Falkland lieth there at peace, whose spirit was
so sad—
That lofty spirit—for the wounds his hapless country
had.
They say—he own'd him tired of life ere we began
the fight.
Well might he be most sad, who knew he strove
against the Right.

Shout we again for Newbury field—the righteous
victory !
We shall hear an echoing triumph-shout before a
month goes by.
Shine thou on Cromwell's Waisby sheaf, O Newbury's
harvest moon !
'Charge through!' ay, through! 'for Truth, and
Peace'—the truthful conqueror's boon.



THE OLD LEGEND OF KING ARTHUR

‘**T**HOU knewest nor fear nor faltering ; thy life-
vow
Of patriot service thou didst well maintain :
Therefore, though Death may hide thy valour now,
When comes worst need thou shalt return again.’

So chaunted in low tones the fairy crew
Of that dark barge whereon King Arthur lay,
Drifting adown the misty river’s flood,
After his latest fight. So chaunted they,
Staunching his death-clefts ; while he, sad of soul,
Ponder’d Sir Lukyn’s story wonder-fraught :
How when Excalibar, at Arthur’s hest
Flung in the stream, had dipp’d toward the wave,
A hand had risen, and grasp’d and borne it down.
And thus King Arthur dream’d amid his wounds.

‘Excalibar, the charmed sword, returns
Unto the hand that gave it,—sunk,—drawn in,—
Nor left such ripple as an autumn leaf
Reaching the water-marge on Evening’s breath.
So sinks my life after its turmoil’d years
Without a trace : blown from its branch of power,—
And Time’s dull stream flows o’er it heedlessly.
It should not be so. I have served the Gods ;
Kept myself pure ; and stoutly grappled Hope,
Till, firm-embraced, our pulses were but one.
It is no braggart speech : yon gifted sword
Had courage for its handle, and as straight
My life was and close-hammer’d as the blade,—
True steel that never struck an idle blow.
Unto what end its stalwartness ? Defeat.
Lo, I lie here. The sword hath left no mark.’

‘Thou shalt return again !’ the Ladies sang ;
While the sore-hearted dream’d amid his wounds.

‘Year after year I strove, and through the fight
Bore Hope upon my breast, as one would bear
His beautiful bride ; and when they slew her there
I struggled on beneath her dearest form.
O Hope ! belovéd, best-belovéd Hope !
That brought my Country’s ransom as thy dower ;

O Hope ! that I have cherish'd 'mid my griefs
In long night-watches and through all the din
Of battle-storm ; ay ! even when toil was curst,
And knightliest endeavour by repulse
Was driven away, like chaff swept from the floor ;
When field on field beheld me overthrown.
Yet never conquer'd : witness Dawn and Eve,
That ever found me rising from defeat
As clomb the Sun from yesternight's red couch !
Would I might battle yet ! Give way ! I will ;
And pile our foes upon the last free space
Of British earth. Why am I slumbering here,
And my good sword not ready to my hand ?

' Year after year, and ever the same fierce strife
Without remission. I was as a pass
Through which a host defiles with measured tramp :
Squadron hard-following squadron till the earth
Rejoices in the custom of sure steps.
Let me be buried in the shallowest tomb,
Beneath the march of heroes ! Death is nought,
If I may be a stair to Victory.
Where art thou ? Victory !— I am here, o'ercome.'

And shame, more deep than spear-thrusts, draining life,
He lay entranced, nor heard the Fairies' song :—

‘Calmly the sun drops in its western grave,
The seed beneath the glebe, and life to death ;
To-morrow comes in joy, ripe corn-fields wave,
And ever the heroic wears its wreath.’

‘How have I fallen ? Has the fault been mine ?
I have not flinch’d from peril, nor counted pains ;
What adverse odds, what difficult steeps to climb,
What possible inconvenience or mishap,
Troubled me never. I ask’d nought but this—
May it serve thee ? my Country ! Welcome then.
Self-care was but a feather in the scale,
Or as a spark in one vast-soaring blaze—
The fiery passionate wish to rescue thee.
Thou wast my sacrificial altar ; I
A bridegroom offering. Do I boast ? Ye Gods !
The boaster has done nothing. Lived and died.
He boasts a failure. Give him leave to say
He fell as a king falleth.’

Where again
The Chorus swell’d around him, as a pulse
Throbbing indignantly against reproach.
‘Thou knewest nor fear nor faltering !’—still they
sang.

‘ Ho ! who will follow Arthur to the war ?
Methought when once our banner was display’d
The whole land should have risen as one man.
Behold your duty— Forward at the foe—
Had been enough.— The recreants ! Woe is me !
They cavil’d at the standard-bearer’s name ;
Doubted the leader could maintain his place ;
Others were worthier, might be ’mong themselves ;
’Twas an unlucky day to close with Doom ;
Yon covert safest was for skirmishers ;
Some little forethought till the rest came up ;—
And so sate down on cowardice, a soft couch,
Where some would plan campaigns, as sluggards think
In morning sleeps they put their armour on,
And wake in bed. But these would never wake :
Rotting amid their reveries till the land
Stank with the Cowards’ Pestilence. ’Twas so—
Brave Hearts that fought by me from first to last !
That we were left to meet the invader’s whelm :
Wrong ever active, while before these homes
Right humbly begg’d for alms some stealthy help
In her sore want. Even that was oft denied.
False-lifed lip-servants ! pillow’d warriors !
Whose crest should be a liar’s cloven tongue,—
You barter’d Freedom for a dunghill ease,
And let the land of all our glorious sires


Be trampled underneath the ruffian heel
Of foreign tyranny.— My soul is drear.

‘Do I forget you? Arthur’s trusty peers!
Proud comrades, lovely in your noble strength:
My Knights, my Royal Ones! whose words were
deeds,

Whose deeds were hymns of triumph. Let me die,
Since you are fallen. Have the Powers betray’d
Your promise? Worth is worthless. Life itself
Is falsehood.— It may be the Powers are weak,
Since Valour wins not. Is their own abode
Invaded by the Evil of our days?—

I am a king, and I may dare to ask.—
Are even the Gods grown false and dastardly?
I hear the smooth lush whispering of the stream,
And, blending with it, words as dreamy smooth.
What forms are these that hang above my bier?
Where do they carry me, throughout this night?—
Defeat, and death, and all before me dark.’

But the white garments glimmer’d in his sight
For all the darkness,— like the first of dawn
To one lone-watching on some weary height;
And the sweet chaunt slid through his barren griefs
Like softest rain in fields long parch’d with drought.



Ever the Fairies sang, as glode the barge.

‘Thou knewest nor fear nor faltering. Thy sure life
Has been an act devout, whose worth shall chain
The future to thy purpose. When the strife
Hath reach’d its height thou shalt return again.’

And one clear voice— whose echoes leap’d to shore
And stirr’d the dead upon the battle-ground—
Sang yet again : the King forgot his wounds.

‘Thy true adventure was a living seed,
The harvest of the Eternal can not fail :
Thy spirit shall return, at their worst need
To help whom now thy arm may not avail.’

It is a fable of the meed of Truth :
Most knight-like Truth, that, scorning sloth or fear,
Hastens to meet the Evils of the time ;
And, be he ne’er so poorly companied,
Dares all their force, copes with their fiercest tides,
Defies disaster and despair itself,
And leaves upon the sorriest place of death—
Where hopes are scatter’d like autumnal wrecks—
A memory that shall live and bring his name
In fire to the hearts of new endeavourers,—
Leading them from the gloomiest depth of care,

Even when their need shall be most desperate,
With power as if his Angel had return'd
To avenge the past defeat with victory.

True-soul'd and valiant ! Arthur ! come again.
Is not our need enough ?

What voice replies ?





THRENODY

IN MEMORY OF
ALBERT DARASZ

(*London, 19 Sept., 1852.*)

ANOTHER death ! another Martyr lain
In the Exiles' Tomb !— O Grief ! thy fangs are
sharp ;

And these heart-cleaving agonies threat to warp
The hopefullest spirit from its upward strain.

Alas ! the higher hope, the farther fall :
And more than lofty hope must be thy pall.

O unaccomplish'd hope ! O grief of griefs,
When the sap faileth ere the worth is ripe !
Thou proud fruit-bearer, whom Decay doth wipe,
As a mere painting, from life's page ! The chiefs
Of the world's worthiest look'd to thee for aid ;
And we to worship in thy branching shade.

The axe hath struck thee in thy manhood's prime :

Thy purpose unmatured : so fairly blown

Thy blossom, and the fruit set : all foreknown

The richness of thy virtue, the sublime

Eternity enkernel'd in its growth.

Thy life read to us certain as God's troth.

Far from thy home thou liest ; strangers' ground

Must pillow thy sad sleep. Some two or three,

Thy brother-exiles, doubly kin to thee,

Their tears long since exhausted, droop around

Thy narrow deathbed : hearts that may not break,—

Harden'd against thy loss for Poland's sake.

Over thy grave no tears ; but death-like clasp

Of hands that may not wave thee back to shore !

Thy tomb is but one martyr-stair the more,

Whereon we mount the martyr's crown to grasp.

O Friend ! we dare not whisper Hope to lay

Our bones by thine. Our hope must turn away.

Must turn even from thy ashes, Well-beloved !

Not thou, nor ought but our relentless task,

May claim our thought. And yet, if toil might ask

A guerdon for the toiler worth-approved,

'T would be some weary hours, toil-spared, to gaze

Back on thy life, re-studying all its praise.

In vain ! Recall the past ! Recall thy life !—
The shadow followeth the vanish'd form ;
His grave is yet moist earth, their tears are warm :
But flowers spring up, new blossoming smiles are rife.
Not unto us. Thy shadow clouds the world,
Deepening the gloom wherein our life was furl'd.

For we have lost thee ; and, though round our brows
The hastening hours entwine their dearest wreath,
Our country's freedom and the world's, thy death
Would shade the laurel blossoms. How carouse
The full of joy above thy distant grave ?
Despair hath buried all in that sea cave.

Ah, no ! God's world is wider than our earth.
What is this earth ? A narrow altar-stone,
Which thou, brave friend ! did'st lay thy life upon
For God : a sacrifice of endless worth.
All worth is endless, thou must live therefore :
Part of the Eternal Work for evermore.

We look to see again thy form divine ;
We pray to follow on thy path. What prayer ?
The vow that slayeth even grief's despair,
The prayer of deeds of the same high stamp as thine.
Stay for us, Angel ! within heaven's gate :
Thy ancient comrades call on thee to wait.

Our arms again shall hold thee to our heart ;
Our eyes again shall read thy inmost soul ;
And foot by foot toward the higher goal
Our lives shall climb :— God ! nevermore to part.
Pray God to snatch us up to heaven's gate :
Lest thy swift-soaring spirit should not wait.

The sun is down ; but in the western clouds
The lengthening trail of splendour grandly lies :
The hem of Hope yet glistens in our eyes.
And what though night the sunniest memory shrouds ?
God hath a morrow for the loving. We
Will grieve no more for one lost utterly.

Memory and faith shall lift us to thy side.
So shall our thought be wing'd, even as the dove
Of comfort, that the weary ark may move
Toward the shore. And whatsoe'er betide
Our lives,— do we not know that thou art free
From earth's lament, from earth's anxiety ?

O blessed Dead ! beyond all earthly pains ;
Beyond the calculation of low needs ;
Thy growth no longer choked by earthy weeds ;
Thy spirit clear'd from care's corrosive chains !
O blessed Dead ! O blessed Life-in-death,
Transcending all life's poor decease of breath !

Thou walkest not upon some desolate moor
In the storm-wildering midnight, when thine own,
Thy trusted friend, hath lagg'd and left thee lone.
He knows not poverty who, being poor,
Hath still one friend. But he who fain had kept
The comrade whom his zeal hath overstept.

Thou sufferest not the friendly caviling
Impugning motive ; nor that worse than spear
Of foeman,— biting doubt of one most dear
Laid in thy deepest heart, a barbed sting
Never to be withdrawn. For we *were* friends :
Alas ! and neither to the other bends.

Thou hast escaped continual falling off
Of old companions ; and that aching void
Of the proud heart which has been over-buoy'd
With friendship's idle breath ; and now the scoff
Of failure even as idly passeth by
Thy poor remains :— *Thou* soaring through the sky.

Knowing no more that malady of hope—
The sickness of deferral, thou canst look
Thorough the heavens and, healthily patient, brook
Delay,— defeat. For in thy vision's scope
Most distant cometh. We might see it too,
But dizzying faintness overveils our view.

And when disaster flings us in the dust,—
Or when we wearily drop on the highway-side,—
Or when in prison'd, exiled depths the pride
Of suffering bows its head, as oft it must,—
We can not, looking on thy wasted corse,
Perceive the future. Lend us of thy force !

No more of grief !— Thy voice comes to us now,
Answering our invocation. We uplift
Our eyes ; and, looking through the tempest-rift,
Behold the light of thy triumphant brow
There in the line of God. Lest we should miss
His farthest throne, he nêareth us with this.

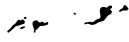




EURYDICE

(*'Orpheus' Sweetest Song.'*)

FROM out the thick shade of a laurel grove
(Crowning a little knoll of sacred ground,
Like to a wreath forlorn hung o'er an urn,)
Issued a dim and melancholy voice,
The tender air infecting with sad breath.
The yellow leaves dropp'd down the failing light,
The autumn wind crept slowly through the boughs ;
The wind and falling leaves with low sweet tones
Echoed that plaint, till the great pulse of life
Seem'd but the ebb and flow of one long sigh.
'*Eurydice ! Eurydice !*' was all
The burthen of that sorrow : but anon
These words came sobbing forth from a burst heart,
Gushing in full flow of abandon'd grief,
Like the low pining wail of Philomel.



‘ Eurydice ! mine own Eurydice !—
O Earth o’er which her music footsteps moved ;
O clear blue Sky, not deeper than her eyes ;
Thou Forest-shade with sunlight leaping through,
Not sunnier than her laugh,— nor lovelier that
Than her thought-shadow’d depth of seriousness ;
Ye Torrents, grandly falling, like her hair ;
Ye honey-clefted Rocks, firm as her truth ;
And ye sun-kissed Slopes of harvest land,
Smooth-rounded as the blessed globes above
Her fertile heart : O Earth and Sky, O Life,—
That speak to me of her in every tone,
That spoke to me of her in every word :—
Why are ye beautiful, and She no more ?

‘ Ye Hamadryads, with brown arms enlaced,
Leaning against the gnarled trunks, half-veil’d
In flood of level sunshine, your bright eyes
Flashing amid green leaves ; or ye who glide
Mistily down dim aisles, with gentle feet
Responsive to the gentle fall of rain
Dropping upon soft turf from lofty boughs,
And glistening in the moonlight, like quick tears
Upon a smiling face :— why do ye mock
My longing with vain phantoms, till mine eyes
Strain to the distant purple of warm eves,

To reach her form ? why do ye play with grief ?
Ye Naiads pure, calm-flowing in the cool
Of overhanging foliage, your lank hair
Trailing along the current,— why do ye
Babble with ripply lips that sweetest word—
Eurydice, until the blabbing reeds
That told King Midas' secret whisper mine
To every wind, till every trickling wave
Repeats my woe in more melodious tone ?
Ye Nereids, with your coral crowns, and plumes
Of waving weed, and blue hair in the spray
Caught on the wave's edge by some eager breeze,—
Why do ye haunt the sea-board with your grace ?
Still rusheth up the shingle and returns
The melody of dancing feet, and round
The smooth-cheek'd pebbles slides the creamy foam.
Eurydice !— O Presences and Powers
Of Nature, once so dear, my heart is deaf
To your best witcheries. The strings are rent.
My lyre no more can answer your delight,
Nor with glad notes provoke your swift reply.

‘ *Eurydice* ! my lost *Eurydice* !
No more thy bounding limbs are eloquent.
On the smooth beach our Greek girls, as of old,
Dance in the twilight : in the torches' glare,

Answering the passion of the westering sun,
Their warm cheeks flush more rosily ; I see
The gleam of their uplifted arms, as each
Hastily in the mazes of the dance
Passes the flame unto some sister hand ;
I hear the song, borne by the gentle-voiced,
Close-following upon the trail of fire
In all its windings,— that dear Freedom-song
Our youths and maidens love ; and I can hear
The sweet time-beats of soft feet on the sand :—
Eurydice ! Eurydice ! no more
Thou lead'st the chorus. Freedom, Fatherland :—
Eurydice ! the future as the past
Is buried in thine urn. I have no hymn.
The torches are extinguish'd ; the drear sea
Moans in the gloomy hollows of its caves.

‘O thou vast soul of Nature I once waked
With lightest touch ! O throbbing heart of Life
That used to listen fondly to my lyre
Made eloquent by her ! I do appeal
Unto thy grateful memories. Alas !
The pulse of Life is no more audible.—
Dryads and Oreads ! wherefore have we laid
Our oil and milk and honey at your feet ?
O Nymphs of forest, mountain, plain, and flood !

Why have we pour'd our songs more honey-sweet,
Our oil-smooth songs, our rich and fruity songs,—
Why have we borne our Dionysian songs
To you, making you jocund with much mirth,
And ye are silent now? O gentle Nymphs!
Have ye no drops left in your brimming cups?
Dear Echo! has thy sympathy no word,
No drained flavour of those richesses,
To bring to my dry heart in her dear name?
Ye Satyrs! wont to troop around our path,
With rude, broad gambols, your most awkward speech
Were musical as Phoibos' golden tongue,
If you would tell me whither She is gone.
I pray to you, for all my household gods
Are scatter'd. Unto you the Homeless prays,
Powers of the waste and solitude, once loved!

'Eurydice! my own Eurydice!—

Alas! no voice replies: the Earth is dead.—

My Beautiful! whose life was as the crown
Of festal days,— whose blush was as the bloom
On the full fruit,— whose days were as ripe grapes,
Clear and delicious on one cluster growing;
My Beautiful! whose smile moved o'er the earth
Like the first sunbeam of the year,— whose voice
Was the mild wind that whispereth odourously

Unto the yearning buds that Spring is come ;
More beautiful than Eos rosy-brow'd,
Or than the arrow-bearing Artemis,—
Thou Dawn of my existence, Promiser
Of glorious days, thou pure Light-bearing One
Chasing the shadows from across my path
When night hung darkly o'er my clouded thought ;
Thou spirit of my potent lyre, now mute ;
Thou Genius of my life ; thou Life ; thou Song ;
Eurydice ! my own Eurydice !

'She is not dead : this death is but a dream.
Where art thou gone ? Eurydice !— Return,
Ere doubt hath grown to madness !— It is not.
The serpent did but coil around my sleep.
Eurydice !— Sweet Echo ! she will come,
Prank'd in thy guise, out of the forest depth,
And smile on me with that deep-hearted smile,
More radiant than Persephone's when closed
Her welcoming arms around Demeter's head
Bow'd with its sheaf of joy upon her breast.—
Alas ! the mourning friends, the solemn priests,
The virgin train, the sobs that hid the cry
Of painful steps toward the funeral pyre,—
Alas ! this little urn clasp'd to my heart,
This empty husk of life, this loneliness,

This death of life,— attest that thou art not ;
That Sorrow lives, but not Eurydice.

‘Thou shalt not die ! O Son of Zeus, who brought
Alcestis to this upper air, attend
My dearer quest ! I will descend to her,
And with my fervent song require from Dis
My own Eurydice. She shall return
Unto this pleasant earth. Persephone
Will listen as my words shall fill her lap
With Enna’s flowers, and in her eyes shall look
Demeter’s mother-glances till her own
O’erflow with ruth, and she shall wind her arms
Around the gloomy king and him conjure
To give me the Belovéd to my song.
Or my whole life shall stand amid the shades,
Before the Fates, and with its chaunt enweave
Her thread of life anew. I will bring back
Her beauty to the earth, and live again,
Strong in the sunlight of her summer love :
Even as a tree that lifteth up its head
After a storm, and, shaking off the weight
Of passed tears, laughs freshly in the sun.
And yet again, her hand upon my heart,
My lyre shall speak unto the Life of things ;
And the fair Nymphs crowd round us as of old ;

And even Satyr shapes look beautiful ;
And the dumb Spirit of the Inanimate
Be stirr'd into expression ; and the Earth,
Hearing the music of thy thoughts, Belovéd !
Grow beautiful as thou art, till the world
Resume the glory of the olden gods.

‘ Eurydice ! my own Eurydice !
My grief is at my feet. My will is strong.
My soul hath pass'd the ferry of despair ;
My song pours forth resistless eloquence ;
My voice is firm ; the Inexorable Three
Relent. Persephone amid her tears
Clingeth impassion'd to the knees of Power :
Thou canst not hold the Loved ; she shall return.
There is no deed impossible to prayer,
To faithful will. — I hear thy following feet,
Most musical of echoes ; step by step
I count those dearest of dear promises,
Conquering the steep ascent ; I see the light
Of our old life ; I hear thy eager pants
Closer and closer ; now thy fragrant breath
Kisses my neck, thy passion-parted lips
Lean forward, and the music of thy curls
Touches my cheek, — Mine own Belovéd One,
Eurydice, mine own Eurydice————

O God ! O Sorrow !—'

•

Life is all a dream.
The Past returns not. Look no more behind !
It is a phantom. Rather let thy song
Mount as a pyre-flame up into the heavens.
O Constellated Beauty ! thou art there.
Not on the earth, nor with the buried Past,
Lo, thy Eurydice awaiteth thee.

Eurydice !

Eurydice !





QUEEN LIBUSSA

(WHOSE LOVE SOUGHT THE LABOURER)

O THAT Queen Libussa !
None so fair as she :
With the wisdom of her choice
Ruling royally.
How her lieges did rejoice
In their loyalty !

Beautiful Libussa !
Queen in her own right
Of exceeding beauty,
And that clear insight
Unto the heart of duty—
Which makes toil delight.

White horse ! in the sunshine
 Speed thou o'er the land,
 Bounding like the Elbe's white spray
 Over the golden sand :—
 Twelve proud nobles track his way,
 By the Queen's command.

Riderless he seeketh
 Whom the Queen would see :—
 ' On iron table dineth
 Under a lonely tree
 He for whom fate designeth
 Bohemia's royalty.'

White horse ! in the sunshine
 Speed thou o'er the land ;
 Through the broad Elbe, through the spray,
 Over the golden sand ;
 Through the wide fields choose thy way,
 Guided by no hand.

And the nobles follow ;
 Slow their speed to his :
 Never the white horse resteth,
 Never his way doth miss :
 ' By our Lady, if she jesteth,
 Wearisome jesting this !'

From her tower she watcheth :
Her assuréd glance
Saith— My choosing may not drift
On the waves of chance :
And now her sunniest smiles uplift
Her perfect countenance.

Toil the milk-white bullocks,
In the sultry air :
Rest they now in the pear-tree's shade ;
Rests the ploughman there ;
Resting dines, the black crust laid
On the bright plough-share.

Speed thou through the sunshine,
White horse ! to his side ;
Stoop thy proud neck,— thou hast found him,
Found the Prophetied :
And the nobles crowd around him,
Heralds from his bride.

Bring the robe of purple,
Golden spurs and sword !
This is he whom we have sought ;
This is Toil's reward.
So they to Libussa brought
Her Bohemian lord.

First his staff he planteth,
 Heaps the earth around :
 Lo ! the hazel buds are springing ;
 And his thoughts unbound
 Seeds of prophecy are flinging
 O'er the furrow'd ground.

So doth Love enlighten ;
 So doth Labour freed
 All the golden story
 Of the future read :
 But now, in the present glory,
 Is no prophet-need.

Swift as swiftest sunshine,
 Swift as lover's thanks,
 Swift as the foaming Elbe's white spray
 Over the golden banks,—
 Yet ever the golden rowels pray
 In the tireless courser's flanks.

O thou queenliest beauty,
 Beyond all compare !
 Reverently he kneeleth,
 Soul-submissive there,—
 Till his lips she sealeth,
 And his wild eyes veileth
 Underneath her hair.

Ever so, Belovéd !
Kneels my soul to thee,—
Evermore to render
Life adoringly,
Thou pale star, whose splendour
Crowns my poverty !

Yet shalt thou, Delightful !
Hold the Future's chain,
When thou trusting loosest.
Labour's steed again,—
When the Poor thou choosest
By thy side to reign.





THE
BRAVE WOMEN OF TANN

[There is a little town in the Vosges, where on all public occasions the women take precedence of the men, in virtue of their conduct related below.]

SATE the heavy burghers
In their gloomy hall,
Pondering all the dangers
Likely to befall,—
Ward they yet or yield the strangers
Their beleaguer'd wall.

‘ All our trade is ruin’d :
Saw I this afar,—
Said I not— our markets
Month-long siege will mar ?
Let not our good town embark its
Fortunes on this war.

‘Now our folly takes us :

War first hath his share,
Famine now ; who dreameth
Bankrupts can repair
Double loss ? or likely seemeth
Victors should despair ?

‘And our trade is ruin’d :

Little that remains
Let us save, to hearse us
From these bloody pains,
Ere the wrathful foe amerce us
Of our farthest gains !’

Up and speaks young Hermann

With the flushing cheek—

‘Shame were it to render :

Though the wall be weak’——
Say the old men— ‘Let us end or
Certain death we seek !’

In their gloomy chamber

Thus their councils wend :—

‘Five of our most trusted

With the morn descend ;
Say— So peace may be adjusted
Chained lives we’ll spend.

‘ Now home to our women !
They’ll be glad to learn
We have weigh’d so gravely
“ Peace ” hath fill’d the urn :
Though in truth they’ve borne them bravely
In this weary turn.’

Home unto their women ;
But each burgher found
Scorn in place of smiling :
For each good-wife frown’d
On this coward reconciling,
Peace with honour bound.

In their morrow’s council
Woman voices rise :
‘ Count ye babes and women
But as merchandize,
To be traffick’d with the foemen,—
Things of such a price ?

‘ We will man your ramparts ;
Ye, who are not men,
Go hide in your coffers !
We will call you when’——
Slid home ’mid the crowd of scoffers
Those five heralds then.

In the morrow's danger
 Women take their share ;
Many a sad grey morning
 Found them watching there :
Till we learn'd from their high scorning
 To make light of care.

Chief with our gaunt warders
 Hermann's young Betrothed
Pass'd, like Victory's Splendour,—
 In bright courage clothed :
Fear hid, fearful to offend her,
 Knowing himself loathed.

Blinding red the sunset !
 In that hopeful breast
Stay'd the foeman's arrow.
 So 'twas won. The rest—
How Despair in strait most narrow
 Smote the Conqueror's crest—

Matters not. Our women
 Drove him to his den.
'Twas his last invasion ;
 We've had peace since then.—
This is why on State occasion
 They precede our men.



LOVE'S SHADOW

I LOVED, gave body and soul for dower,
Then he flung me from his heart.
What else? he had gather'd and worn the flower :
Let it fall ! and so depart.

I was a loved and duteous wife—
The wife of a worthy lord :
O never worthier, nobler life
Deserved to be adored.

But I,— I daily, nightly pray'd,
As the loving need not pray :
Dear God ! vouchsafe to me thine aid
To be true to him alway.

And he I loved was my husband's friend.
I never loved man but him.
That passionate heaven so low did bend
My wifely eyes grew dim.

Under the porch I stood alone
As through the lines he came :
Or ever his hand had touch'd my own
My blood was boiling flame.

O God, to lie on a loving breast,
Unable to make return !
And O for the fire that knows no rest,
That burneth, and aye must burn !

Or ever his breath had woo'd my cheek—
Why doth the lady blush ?
Or ever his love had time to speak
My life toward him did rush.

Under the gnarled oaken boughs,
On a grey moss'd stone we sate ;
Silent were both. What need of vows
In the presence of Love and Fate ?

It was but two or three days at most ;
 He came, scarce spoke, and went :
 The very sun was a mooned ghost
 In the dreary firmament.

And daily, nightly, ever I pray'd :
 Great need was now to pray :
 O Truth ! vouchsafe to me thine aid,
 Lest I should fall away.

Again, in the hot and sultry June
 The Presence is at my gate ;
 And my pulses throb to a lofty tune,
 And my heart is all elate.

For I will love him and do no wrong :
 O Truth ! upstay me now.
 Thou and I, Belovéd ! are strong ;—
 His lips were on my brow.

And so, weak heart ! be brave awhile ;
 Parch'd lips ! hope not to kiss.
 I met my lord with a loyal smile ;
 But my soul was none of his.

'Take her, and love her more than I'——
For ruth I could not move :
How I long'd to kiss him tenderly,—
The man I did not love.

Take her—— And wherefore didst thou take ?
My joy hath made me blind.
Love ! I have left him for thy sake ;
What welcome shall I find ?

Or ever grey autumn bronzed the leaves,
Poor Hope, that doubted ne'er,
Was cowering under her palace eaves ;
The winds play'd with her hair.

Mockingly then the Loved laugh'd out—
'My Beautiful ! be content ;
'Yes, I do worship thee, past all doubt ;
'But a Wife I never meant.

'Summer hath many a warm day yet.
'Ever must love be free.'
Carelessly laugh'd he— 'Cheeks tear-wet
'Will grow too pale for me !'

Had he tired, had love grown cold and dull,
Had desire been satisfied ;
But a flower for my lord Caprice to cull,
And then to fling aside !

Had he loved another ; but worse, far worse,
The doom he brought me nigh,—
The sorrow, the shame, the clinging curse,
Of loving unworthily.

Loving— O more than heaven above ;
And to feel that all return
Was the low desire which is not love—
A 'love' which can seek and spurn.

Scornfully laugh'd he as I went—
'What would'st thou have ? Sweet Life !
'Little matters for love's content
'That empty name of Wife.'

.

So a year pass'd by, and we two ne'er met ;
And I tried to loathe his name.
And no one cared for the cheeks tear-wet
But the one I would not claim.

A long long year. And then again
We two were side by side.
By the death-bed of my lord we twain
Were watching, till he died.

Then love's dark hate pass'd out of me,
And I pray'd again— True Heart !
Love me and wed me. ' Love is free '—
He answer'd ; ' We will part.'

Scornfully laugh'd he as he went —
' 'Tis better we part, Sweet Life !
' Thou would'st hardly be more content
' Even with the name of Wife.'

Ere I look'd through the mist of tears
He, the Belovéd, was gone.
How could I meet my widow'd years,
Unlovely and alone ?

Then Love stood manifest in Wrath :
I cursed him frantically.
And slipt the Avenger on his path :—
Who could avenge but I ?

And step by step I follow'd him,
I track'd him everywhere ;
In vain he hid,— the tigress grim
Could never miss her lair.

And daily, nightly his gate before,
I lean'd at the lintel-post—
O never, never I loved him more
Than when I hated most.

And at length we met. And gaze for gaze.
He laugh'd, but his voice was kind :
The rich sweet voice of the summer days
Till I grew sick and blind

And dizzy in Love's great glare of light.
Then fell Love's shadow— Hate :
And e'er the cloud had left my sight
The Man, the Loved, my Life's Delight,
Lay dead at his own gate.





THE CAPTIVE ARAB



THE captive of his bow and of his sword,
 I dwell within his walls and can not leave ;
 Though ever in the absence of my lord
 Hopes of escape I weave.

But he returns and holds my hands in his,
 My heart to his, and all the hopes are gone ;
 And I forget my restlessness in bliss
 With that Belovéd One.

Woe, woe is me, a wretched prisoner !
 A fetter'd slave ! a bondwoman ! a thrall !
 Now he unbinds me, yet I can not stir :
 His love binds more than all.

O joy ! great joy ! my lord comes home again :
My lord, my loved, my master and my king !
My own Belovéd ! this one passionate strain
Amends all suffering.

And— ‘Dost thou love me well?’ I meet his smile
With radiant answer : Love makes bondage sweet ;
I would not leave thee. In a little while
My joy is less complete.

And longings for old Araby return—
My Araby the Blest. Love’s hearth is dim.
So strong the thoughts with which I can but yearn,
I scarcely think of Him.

My free wild Arab life ! This place grows dark,—
This narrowness is dreadful as a tomb.
Ay ! in the Temple and before the Ark
I’d pine for want of room.

My free delightful Araby ! my life !
My roving independent carelessness !
It is a yoke— this destiny of Wife :
I love thee ne’ertheless.

It is a yoke— O very hard to bear,
For one who never knew constraint or let.
I am not fit for this. I can not wear
Your homely jewels yet.

Though I will try. Dear Love ! I kiss thy lids,
And draw thee sleeping closer to my heart.
What restless dream another kiss forbids,
Lest I should ne'er depart ?

Lest I of slavery should grow so fond
As to rejoice in it for thy dear sake ?
Never ! my wings are crush'd, my hopes despond,
My heart can only break.

In mine own wilds I was a wilful queen :
How can I take a menial's place and form ?
Love's heaven is high— you tell me, pure, serene.
The eagle loves the storm.

I must be gone. His eyes are closed in sleep,
Weary with love ; I put him from my breast.
One kiss : Love ! thou art strong, but canst not keep
Thy wild bird in its nest.

I must make haste to go before he wakes,
Before his arms encircle me again
As with a band of iron (my heart aches
With love and restless pain),

Before his eyes can look their fond reproach,
Before his waking touch thrills through my heart.
How to keep back these thoughts that will encroach
Whene'er I would depart?

He woke soon as I turn'd, and I return'd :
His look was as a chain I could not break.
I tried to bless him in whose fire I burn'd,
Who tied me to the stake.

And so again some days of plaintive joy,
Of happiness. Indeed I love thee well :
Thy love makes present gold of my alloy,
A heaven of my hell.

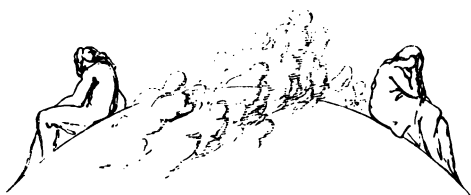
But in thy absence ! O, it can not be.
I will depart now. I will not be led
Bound to thy triumph, no ! not even by thee,
Not to a bridal bed.

Thou hast unbound me ; I take up my bow
And the old arrows ; I halt not to test
The slackness of the string ; I leave thee now.
Yes ! leaving thee is best.

Forget me and make merry in thy home
With one more fit for bondage and delight.
More loving eyes shall look on thee, and some
Be pleasant in thy sight.

For me— O how I hate this closing wall !
I must be gone. My will speeds through thy gates.
When thou return'st—— O Love ! Love ! Love !
thy thrall
Upon the threshold waits.





THE RUINED CITY

SO that great city underwent the curse
 Of silence, till its very life was death :
 Until all outer act was but the hearse
 Of its inborne monotony of breath.

The doer went abroad to daily toil ;
 Did, and came duly back against the night ;
 Wearily won and sadly wore the spoil,—
 A woe-worn victim even for all the plight

Of wreathéd victory (that fearful doom
 Had struck out love and joy and worthy pride
 And energy) : he was as one to whom
 Is given a soul's work, yet the soul denied.


He did, because it seemed right to do ;
He lived, because he had no wish to die ;
His life was death ; there was no change, he knew,—
For death seems only life borne silently.

And all the city underwent that spell
Of burying hope beneath their sealed lips :
As if the sun was gone, and none might tell
Even his own heart the end of the eclipse.

A people without hope. Stern Faith awhile
Held on. But Faith has sometimes need of Hope.
So Faith's closed lips at last fix'd in a smile
Of sullen scorn : a smile that might not ope

The low dark room of the sepulchral heart,—
Wherein one tenant was, the trailing thought
Of many-coiled sorrow, whose fell smart
Was painless now, and only torpor wrought.

Till even the merest form of life became
Too burdensome for stoutest will to bear :
One might as well suppose a motionless flame
As life fed only on a still despair.



The living hopes had made the city great,
The hero strengths had built its palace pride,
Lay down in the grassy streets, dull-eyed, to wait
The slow repeats of morn and eventide.

The palace towers crumbled unrepair'd ;
The city gates were shut, and none went forth ;
Weeds choked the glorious ways, and no man cared ;
None spoke : since Hope forsook the City of Worth.

There in the ruin'd temple once had stood
Her statue beside Faith. Hers fell that day
She pass'd out thence. And now in the solitude
Beneath the feet of Faith her image lay,

Shatter'd to pieces. Wherefore this still fate,
This silence, this accurséd penalty.
The Gods desert us. We not even wait
The useless Death : for, living thus, we die.

Faith's statue yet remain'd : a piteous sight :
Clothed by great spiders, hooded thick with dust,
Worshipp'd by unscared vermin day and night,
The marble flaw'd, the gold devour'd by rust.

So the long years crawl'd on. What lived or died
In the great city matter'd unto none.
Oblivion ! be merciful, and hide
The wasting misery of the overthrown.

One word alone had been the mighty leaven
Out of this sealed tomb to raise the dead,
To lift despair from hell to highest heaven :
One only word—— that never may be said.





FIVE SERMONS

FROM ONE TEXT

EVE—THE INDIAN WIDOW—VESTA'S PRIEST
JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER—IPHIGENIA AT AULIS

EVE

FLUNG out of Eden, and my child is Cain.
Woe, woe is me !

I have pluck'd knowledge, and I find it pain.
Love hath made me accurst : since all the gain
Of self is misery.

O fierce desire that would not let me rest !

O lovely snake—

Thou subtlest beast, that with thy low behest
Lured me from innocence !— From good to best
My way I take.

For innocence is not the best, though good.

Thy gates are shut,

Sweet Eden !— I return not if I could.

Better, O Man ! hard labour and scant food
In this poor hut.

From innocence through sorrow and much wrong
Our pathway lies.
Only by suffering doth the soul grow strong.
Leave me the lower creatures, the vile throng
Of sense. Arise !

Forth to the desert ! We will plant out there
A garden brave.
This doom of death, this darkness of despair,
Is the shadow of higher Love. And look thou where
He bursts the grave.

THE INDIAN WIDOW

THROUGH the purifying fire——
Upheap the sandal-wood, and thereupon
Throw cinnamon,
Rich-scented gums, sweet frankincense, and myrrh ;
And pour the holy oil
Over the forest spoil
Till the flame enroboth her !—
‘ I aspire !’

‘Through the purifying fire——
 ‘With the dead Belovéd lying at my feet,
 ‘And music sweet
 ‘Climbing the golden smoke toward the sky ;
 ‘The white flowers in my wreath
 ‘Crowning me Bride of Death.
 ‘Let the earth pass cloudily !
 ‘I aspire !’

Through the purifying fire——
 True Spirit ! free thyself from robes of sense ;
 Soul ! grow intense ;
 Devotion ! climb unto Love’s highest throne.
 Behold, O seeking eyes !
 The pile of sacrifice,
 And the flame for bridal zone.——
 ‘I aspire !’

VESTA’S PRIEST

O WHITE-ROBED Vesta ! to maintain thy flame
 I swear.
 Bow, proud patrician ! From thy snowy hair,
 O Wisdom ! take the crown.
 Kneel humbly down

Ye warriors ! and ye, reverend priests ! bend low
 Before the Sacred Virgins as they go
 Along the public street :
 Blessing the way with feet
 That tread down shame.

O clear-eyed Vesta ! O neglected flame !—

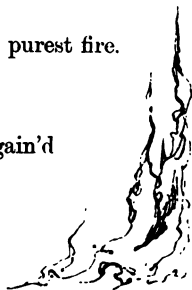
O Death !—

Close veil her weakness ! lead her hence beneath
 The all-concealing earth !
 Why speak of worth,
 Of innocence, of natural loving need ?
 We hear in vain, we may but heed
 The worship and the oath.
 Unfaithful to her troth,
 We bury Shame.

Divinest Vesta ! Mother of the Powers !

Inspire

My heart, and fill me with thy purest fire.
 Choose for thy lamp this soul,
 To show the goal
 Of virtue, only in thy temple gain'd
 By lives ungrieved, unstain'd.
 Keep me above the earth !
 Kindle within me worth
 For all the hours !



JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

GIVE me a little while to mourn my youth !—
This lightning is too swift. Let me behold—
One instant— if thy vow have so much ruth—
Hope's violet tints melt in the ruddy gold.

Let me chain back the flood-gates of my tears,
Harden these quivering lips, hot cheeks make pale ;
Let me gaze firmly up the marbled years
Even to the utmost bleakness I must scale.

It was a wild vow, O my Father !— wild
As all vows are : rash Will outreaching Right.
Nevertheless I am thine own true child.
Slay me, since good that seemeth in thy sight.

Kill me for very righteousness, though none
May know the simple meaning of my doom.
So thou and thy least word may be at one,
Shadow thy victor helm with this dead bloom.

O beautiful lightning !— all life's rainbow hues
Tone thy brief splendour : thy far purples, Love !
Joy's roseate glow. Now, Father ! smite : I choose
The clear white sword-gleam. Smite as I approve.

IPHIGENIA AT AULIS

I AM ACHILLES. Thou wast hither brought
To be my wife, not for a sacrifice.
Greece and her kings may stand aside as nought
To what Thou art in my expectant eyes.

Or kings or gods. I too am heaven-born.
I trample on their auguries and needs.
Where the foreboding dares to front my scorn
Or break the promise from my heart proceeds?

But thou, Belovéd! smilést down my wrath
So able to protect thee. Who should harm
Achilles' Bride?—Thou pointest to the path
Of sacrifice, yet leaning on my arm.

There is no need of words; from me reply
As little requisite: Thy lightest hand
Guideth me, as the helm the ship; Thine eye
Doth more than all the Atridæ could command.

Thou givést life and love for Greece and Right:
I will stand by thee lest thou shouldst be weak—
Not weak of soul.—I will but hold in sight
Thy marvelous beauty.—Here is She you seek.



THE HUNCHBACK

GOD lays his burden on each back :
 But who
What is within the pack
 May know ?

All pointed at the Hunchback. He, they said,
Was hideous ; and their scorn
Doubled the anguish which bow'd down his head,—
So friendlessly forlorn.

Low bow'd his head, even lower than was need,
For all his Atlas weight ;
Bow'd with men's scorn, and with his own sad heed
Of what might be the freight


'Neath which so painfully his being creep'd :
 ' Was it a heritage,
Growth of his father's sins on him upheap'd ?
 Or his own sinful wage ?

Ask'd he of lawgiver and sage and priest,
 Of all the esteem'd and wise ;
And gat no answer. Nay ! not even the least
 From worshipp'd Beauty's eyes.

Not that they spake not. Some said— It was nought,
 There was no hump at all ;
And some that— It was nothing which he sought—
 The why such did befall ;

Some laugh'd ; and some long visages did pull ;
 Some knew not what he meant ;
But the Belovéd was so pitiful
 He cursed her as he went.

Some bade him quit vain inquest, and delight
 Each sense with pleasant things ;
And some swore 'twas the sign that Heaven would
 blight
 His highest imagings ;



And some— An operation would remove
The mere excrescent flesh ;
While others— Pruning it would only prove
How fast 'twould grow afresh.

And some, who cited law and gospel, laid
New heaviness on his neck :
Let him that hath have ever more, they said,
And let the wreck'd bear wreck !

Yet after every check, repulse, and scoff,
He ask'd again, again—
What is this burthen ? Can none take it off ?
Is there no end of pain ?

Flung back on his own soul, what he inquired
Was hardly, sadly taught ;
With desperate travail he at length acquired
Something of what he sought.

He found there was a meaning : that was much :
He trusted God was Good :—
These thoughts made patience earnest, out of such
He earn'd some spirit-food.

And grew : for all the evil hump remain'd,
Like Sindbad's Man o' the Sea.
Only he had no hope to be unchain'd :
How from himself get free ?

At last came Time, who from the chrysalis
Brings forth the rainbow'd fly ;
Of Time he ask'd— What was this weight of his ?
And Time gave full reply.

Time mask'd as Death, yet smiling, did unpack
The worn man's crushing load :
Two wings sprang forth ; high o'er the cloudy wrack
The Angel, whom men call'd *That Poor Hunchback*,
Through farthest heavens rode.

So, looking westward yestereve, I knew
A figure of warm cloud :
A very humpback till his load he threw,
As Lazarus left his shroud.





['Perhaps the notablest Norse God we hear tell of is the God *Wunsch* or *Wish*.'—Carlyle's *Hero Worship*.]

GOD Wish ! if one of modern days
Might lift to thee a prayer,
What form of worship should he raise
To claim thy care ?

Such words as these ?— I would have health ;
I would have strength of limb,
With truth at heart, and wisdom's wealth
Of eyes ne'er dim ;

I would be gentle, pure, and fair,
As One who loved me pray'd ;
And bold and firm to do or bear
In Virtue's aid ;


I would have will to prophesy ;
Brave deeds I would achieve,
And on the Future's tapestry
Grand tissues weave ;

My life should journey as a star
Tow'rd an eternal aim,
And nations worship from afar
Its track of flame ;

I would build up in my own mind
A temple unto Truth,
And on its shrine an offering bind,—
My age and youth ;

I would have faith of One to whom
My faith should be a prize ;
And love,— if thou couldst ope the tomb
Wherein One lies ;

And children's beauty should bud forth
Around the parent stem,
And hope behold our scantiest worth
Fullgrown in them ;



I would have means to enrich the poor,
And power to uplift the low,
And all misfortune's barren moor
With blessings sow ;

And I would win my fellows' love,
If love may guerdon zeal
That dares their deepest miseries prove
To surely heal ;

And praise should keep my name embalm'd
In history's choicest cell,
That men might say in years joy-calm'd—
'He loved us well.'——

Or should I pray in fewer words
For virtue, love, and fame ?
Or ask all joy that earth affords
In one loved name ? ——

No answer issues from the North ;
The Norsemen's potent God
Sits signless ; Doom no more comes forth
To obey his nod.

God Wish ! have I not pray'd aright ?
Yet grant, before I die,
One lightning-flash athwart the fight,
One glimpse of sky.—

God Wish !— What other God but thou,
Under some aspect Greek,
Approved his favourites with the vow—
'Have what ye seek !'

They chose 'what best might please the Powers';
Ere morning did return
The hope of all their youthful hours
Lay in an urn.

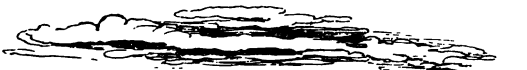




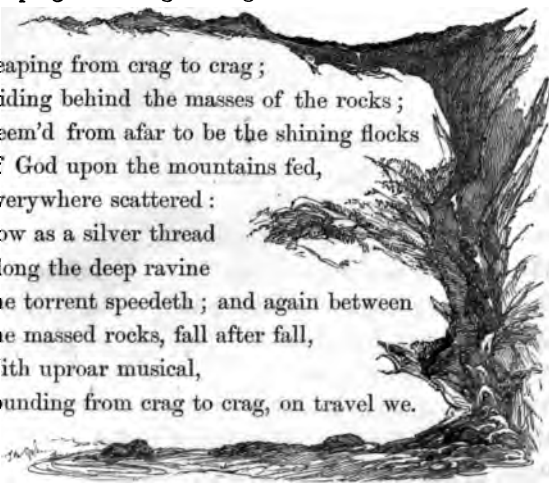

SONG OF THE STREAMS

WE leap from the rock's sheer edge,
Boisterously :
With a shout and hearty laughter
Fore and after :
Joyously :
Slide we over the mossy ledge,
Lusciously,
Dreaming deliciously :
And an eternal roar rolls with us on our way.

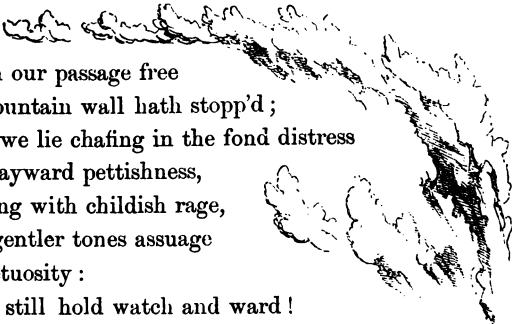
Clear is the young spring day !
The trilling laugh of childish glee
And sobs and bubbling mirth are ours
'Mid the wild flowers,—
The playful hours racing us through the heath,
Down the hill-side racing us out of breath.
O'er us the eternal voice rolls on sonorously.




An organ thunder—the dim melody
Of many instruments—a rushing throng
Of men and voices,—near a charmed song,
Solemn afar, even as the voice of God :
And heaven is children-trod :
Over the many hills the same bright tune
Singing to sun and moon ;
High company upon the hills we had ;
Were not we glad,
Leaping from crag to crag ?



Leaping from crag to crag ;
Hiding behind the masses of the rocks ;
Deem'd from afar to be the shining flocks
Of God upon the mountains fed,
Everywhere scattered :
Now as a silver thread
Along the deep ravine
The torrent speedeth ; and again between
The massed rocks, fall after fall,
With uproar musical,
Bounding from crag to crag, on travel we.



Anon our passage free
 A mountain wall hath stopp'd ;
 And we lie chafing in the fond distress
 Of wayward pettishness,
 Boiling with childish rage,
 Till gentler tones assuage
 Impetuosity :
 Still, still hold watch and ward !
 A postern is unbarr'd :
 Through the quick gap our damm'd-up waters gush
 All eagerly :
 And our high song hath dropp'd
 Adown the steepes of life, and youthhood's flush
 Floweth more steadily.



Continueth our glee
 Through the wide meadows, through the long lush grass ;
 Our jocund course between
 The great grand trees, who in our changeful glass
 Gaze, as a seer into a depth of dreams :
 Queenliest trees, proud-form'd, with port serene :
 And now our many streams
 Are blending, and the mountain alleys,
 Merged in one broad road, plunge toward the valleys,
 While o'er our torrent force the hill-song leaps.

And here and there uppeeps
Through grassy hair the weird and rugged face
Of some grey rock, one of the giant race
Of our bleak birth-place, grey as the memories
Of an uncultured world, the asperities
Of our progressive life : and ever keeps
The ancient hill in sight, its head in heaven :
And little rustic homelinesses
Welcome the mountain-born with flower-wreathing,
Bright buttercups, primroses quiet-breathing,
Rich-scented chestnut-bloom ;
And in the torrent's foam
The sweet May dips her tresses,
Scarcely distinct :— On, on the waves are driven,
As o'er us the old mountain voice still hovers.

And every turn discovers
New beauty ; other streamlets pour,
Like other minds their flood of thought,
Or other beings influence, brought
From many a distance, hour by hour ;
And the stream swells its volume, and the tide
Of power is amplified ;
And earth is fertilized, field-glories wave,
And human dwellings stand on either side :
While with melodious stave

The river saileth through the busy scene,
And o'er it most serene
The hill-song, like a heaven-burden, hovers.

Now, like two eager lovers,
Two fair streams mingle hearts, and our full song
Is the quick panting of voluptuous life
The harvest fields among,
Beneath heaven-arched skies with blithest warblings
rife :

And our sunn'd face is flush'd even as a bride's :
And many a trickling kiss in music glides,
Like molten silver bells, our features o'er—
A chorus liquefied of birds and flowers :
Such ecstasy is ours.
Yet still floats o'er our life the distant roar
Of the far mountain hymn :—God whispers as of old.





FROM A POLITICAL POEM

1848

THROUGH thy pain, and through the languor
Of despair, and from the anger
Of long-disappointed hope,
Thou, O Human World ! redeeming,
The pale phantoms of thy dreaming,
Shalt have strength with Time to cope.
Though thy weary feet be tender,
Though thy lids bear not the splendour
Of the Coming of thy Lord,
Yet, fond Hope ! shalt thou behold him,
And thy powerful arms enfold him,
And thou know thyself adored.

Yet shall Love, O Hope pursuing !
On thy heart his life renewing,
 Speed with thee his tireless flight ;
And the wake of his star-tresses
O'er earth's untrack'd wildernesses
 Guide Man to the far delight.
Lo ! I hear the acclamations
Of the Faith-awaken'd Nations ;
 And the sweet low-chaunted song
Of their organized endeavour :
It soars upward ever, ever,
 On the swift wings, angel-strong.

Awake, sad Hope ! the tyrants of the earth
Are passing like night-shadows : though some clouds
Seek to prolong their reign, those lingering shrouds
Cradle the Morning in its hour of birth.
 Ye ' Dead ' come forth !

Upon the broad firm ground
Base ye the templéd round
Of human Right, where Men as Gods shall be !
 O ye Republic Nations !
Lay wide the deep foundations

Both of your own and Man's Equality !—
 Uprear the varied columns
 In their own ample volumes,—
Upbear the sacred roof of Country, ye
 Who know what Freedom meaneth !
 When each on other leaneth,
Best power of service is real Liberty.—
 Devote upon that shrine
 Your lives to the Divine,—
Render to Heaven the worship of the Free !
 The Heaven of sure progression,
 Whose harmonized expression
Is thy perpetual song, Humanity !



From the depth of night
I have taken flight
Into the dawn of a pure delight ;
And my song upsprings
Upon mighty wings
To the light of thy smile's imaginings ;—

Into the Heaven
Where Faith was driven
When Earth by the winter storm was riven ;
From the rock and chain
Of a hopeless pain
Up to thy Heaven I soar again ;—
From the lowliest grave
That Truth dared brave,
Seeking even Death, to redeem the Slave ;
Like an angel's psalm,
To the realms of calm,
Where Love is heal'd with immortal balm ;—
To the azure sky
Of Faith's visions high
Of a serene Eternity,—
Where Toil is blest,
And where Hope may rest
To gaze in the eyes of the Loveliest.





DEFINITIONS

VALOUR

REALIZED earnestness, in every game
Flung, like Thor's hammer, always at an aim.

COURAGE

Heart-action, valour's heart-felt cheerfulness,
Making the firm lips smile in grief's worst stress.

HONESTY

Due keeping, though none witness, claim, or force,
Whatever bond thy conscience doth endorse.

RIGHT

What conscience warrants thee *thy* right shall be :
RIGHT is the secret of Eternity.

WISDOM

The perfect sight of duty ; thought that moulds
A rounded life, and all its aim beholds.

DUTY

The debt of Life. To what ? Unto the whole
Of Life,—unto the Universal Soul.



LIFE

The soul's due exercise, by will impell'd :
The courser of a chariot, driven and held.

TRUTH

Healthfullest life of thought, look, word, and deed :
Of endless worth the never failing seed.

DEATH

Inaction : the soul's sleep : God doth not die,
Needing no rest in his eternity.

HEALTH

The child of Exercise and Truth, whom Mirth
Nursed from the very moment of its birth.

FAITH

Trust in the Beautiful. Undoubting Youth !
Thy Mistress is not truer than God's Truth.

RELIGION

The baluster of life, whose stairs are creeds
Whereon the eternal soul tow'rd God proceeds.

REVERENCE

Obeisance unto Greatness under-stood :
The first step of a human life toward Good.

SACRIFICE

An offering unto God, a gift of worth ;
The halcyon of the storms that toss our earth.

CHEERFULNESS

The thankful smile that lights the martyr's pyre ;
The highest Jubilate of God's choir.

ASPIRATION

Elijah's chariot of winged fire :
We journey heavenward when we aspire.

SELFISHNESS

Grazing, he looks on earth : how can he see
The opening heavens and God's eternity ?

SERVICE

Think what God doth for man : so mayst thou know
How god-like service is, and serve also.

WORK

Life, health, worth, worship,—rest itself no more
Than labour the tired labourer to restore.

INTEGRITY


The perfectly rounded wholeness of a life
Whose core is truth, whose hours are ne'er at strife.

VIRTUE

Virtue is Manhood. Male and female He
Created Man, and said—Live manfully !

SELF-POSSESSION

The user of virtuous qualities ; the hand
That grasps and guides and forward thrusts the brand.



PRINCIPLE

A life's beginning : ay ! the very ground
Where best expedients flourish and abound.

BEGINNING

Begun, or promised : it is all the same.
False is the arrow falls short of its aim.

WILL

The parent of an act, the seed of worth :
Life's threshold. Pilgrim ! halt not, but go forth.

WILLING

Who wills says— ' I will do ; at least I try,'
' I will ' is a bond, an oath, a prophecy.

EXPEDIENCY

Ex pede : building, hastening, foot by foot.
Building foundation needs, as growth needs root.

FEAR

Paralysis of will ; torpedo doubt,
Changing the accomplish'd knight to helpless lout.

DESPAIR

The shadow of a slave who turns his back
On the light, and cries— The universe is black.

DARING

Some fear to dare not ; some ' dare ' when none see ;
Some are blind-bold : none *dare* of all these three.

DOUBT

The mountain's image trembles in the lake :
Lake Doubt. Perhaps the mountain does not quake.

IMPOSSIBILITIES

Folly's unproveable assertions ; lies
Given credence to by credulous cowardice.

DISAPPOINTMENT

I worshipp'd Truth and Justice : wherefore I
Had Disappointment for my enemy.

PATIENCE

Baffled and helpless Valour laid in bonds,
That bideth God's delay, and ne'er desponds.

FORTITUDE

Unchain me, Strength ! from this Caucasian fell :
For I have acted and endured as well.

DEFEAT

One of the stairs to heaven. Halt not to count
What you have trampled on ! Look up, and mount !

FAILURE

Who knows ? Each year, as every wheat-seed, dies :
And so God harvests his eternities.

TRIUMPH

Christ on his Cross, Prometheus vulture-riven :
A sacrificial flame that reaches heaven.

SUCCESS

The harvest of a worshipful essay.
The sower waits the seasons : God his stay.

GLORY

Lo where some dunghill cock 'mid rotting sheaves
Crows— 'I am laurel-crown'd' : but who believes ?

HONOUR

A saintly glory : ay ! a starry crown
Bright in the night-time of Oblivion's frown.

FREEDOM

The opportunity for healthy growth ;
No liar's licence, but a virtuous oath.

VICE

Blasphemy 'gainst thy self : a making foul
The Holy of Holies even in thine own soul.

SIN

Inquire of God ! of thine own soul ! or—— Stay !
In yon field hangs a scarecrow : will he say ?

SHAME

The wage of Baseness ; and the shadow of Wrong :
However lofty or however strong.

PLEASURE

A flower on the highway-side. Enjoy its grace ;
But turn not from thy road, nor slacken pace !

PAIN

One of God's words to thee. Is it a curse !
Contempt and even pleasure might be worse.

LOVE

Pure worship of the Beautiful— the True—
Under whatever form it comes to you.

BEAUTY

A vision, or an image, or a look,
Of the Eternal in Time's rippling brook.

PURITY

'To the pure all things pure' does not include
Practice or knowledge of the impure and lewd.

PASSION

Beasts have their appetites and instincts ; men
The passion of love : live differently, then !

CHASTITY

A temple's vestal guardian, who maintains
Even the marbled avenue pure from stains.

MARRIAGE

The wedding of the twin halves of the soul :
Making one perfect and productive whole.

FRIENDSHIP

Hand-linking of two sympathetic lives ;
A double bloom that in mid-winter thrives.

HAPPINESS

The sunshine and the starlight of the soul :
God's smile on Courage nearing Virtue's goal.

PROSPERITY

A bloom that groweth not on every flower :
But only on Beauty in some fortunate hour.

RESIGNATION

Resign is re-assign. To God resign !
But man gave nought : contend while life is thine.

HOPE

The cup-bearer of life : a water-wraith :
In heaven the bride of Strength : Gods call her Faith.

CHARITY

More real than Hope and far even Faith above
Is Charity : when Charity is Love.

FALSEHOOD

A coward's arrow aim'd with the feather first ;
The vile begetter of a race accurst.

LOYALTY

Holding with Evil, flunkeying a Lie,—
This is Thieves' Honour, but not Loyalty.

PATRIOTISM

Not the mere holding a great flag unfurl'd,—
But making it the goodliest in the world.

PEACE

Victory's good angel, not a corse 'mong worms :
The shepherd's dog scorns peace on wolfish terms.

NON-INTERVENTION

Cain's cowardliest son, whose yet more insolent word
Is— *I am not* my brother's keeper, Lord !

TRADE

Real Trade is the honest interchange of wealth.
The eyeless-needle-seller's name was Stealth.

WEALTH

Cornelia's jewels ; blind old Milton's thought ;
Job's patience ; and the lesson Lazarus taught.

POVERTY

Can Wealth be envious ? Dives ! Dives ! thou
For all thy wealth dost envy Lazarus now.

CONTENT

The oil on a slave's chain ; the ease of beasts ;
Sometimes brave Strength despising common feasts.

ENVY

The swinish greed which of all good would make
Merely a pool its own vile thirst to slake.

JEALOUSY

Be jealous of evil, but make way for good !
True Jealousy ! act not as Envy would !

EQUALITY

Procrustes' bed? No! Justice' equal beam :
Which weigheth all, both what they are and seem.

CONSISTENCY

Last night I wore a cloak ; this morning not.
Last night was cold ; this morning it was hot.

NARROWNESS

Be narrow !— as the bud, the flame, the dart :
But narrow in thy aim, not at thy heart.

JUSTICE

The sightless Angel by God's Throne, who hears
The falling of the Wrong'd One's lightest tears.

MERCY

Twin genii of life prepare God's path :
The fair one Mercy call'd, the dark one Wrath.

WRATH

The thunder-burst that clears the stagnant air ;
A divine fury ; Truth with horrent hair.

VENGEANCE

God's sentence upon Wrong : or lightning swift,
Or slowly gathering like a winter drift.

VINDICTIVENESS

When God names thee his Thunder-bearer—— Then
Spare to revenge thyself on erring men.

REVENGE

Evening the scale of life down-drawn by ill :
Not heaping on wrong *done* more wrongful *will*.

FORGIVENESS

The condonation of a wrong. What then ?
Are not wrong-doers mostly brother men ?

PITY

The tears that left undimm'd the Angel's eyes
When he thrust Adam forth from Paradise.

TOLERANCE

Serve thou Truth first, albeit Tolerance wait !
Falsehood is more intolerable than hate.

KINDNESS

Ask the physician if he seeks to please !
How shall we name the kind Austerities ?

FRANKNESS

Sincerity of speech : the temperate breeze
That gives the convalescing health and ease.

LIBERALITY

True liberality gives of its own :
And charity for vice and crime has none.

GENEROSITY

The giving grandly. Giving never asks
For gratitude ; nor barter ; nor sets tasks.

BENEVOLENCE

Well-wishing. Well ! at best but an intent.
May not a poor man be benevolent ?

USURY

Who giveth to the Poor lends to the Lord :
The usurer trusts to the securest word.

DISINTERESTEDNESS

Selling for glory ? lending to the Lord ?
I will not ask even Conscience for reward.

ROYALTY

Reality : no ape in a lion's skin,
But Crowned Strength that worthily doth win.

GENTILITY

His Grace's scullion, housed at Beulah Spa,
Keeping a gig ; Vulgaritv's Mamma.

GENTLENESS

The grace and delicate manner of a flower ;
The expression of a heart of genial power.

COURTESY

A royalest grace ; the womanly bending down
From queenliest state to even the lowliest clown.

PRIDE

Due reverence toward thy self. Doth God come there ?
Make thou the house well worthy his repair.

HUMILITY

Self, seen in a puddle : lift thee toward the sky,
And proudly thank God for Eternity !

OBSTINACY

A mule with blinkers. Ay ! he goes quite straight ;
Runs at the gate-post and will miss the gate.

PRUDENCE

The saddle-girth of valour. Thou art wise
To gird it well, but not around thine eyes.

COMPROMISE

Twice two is four, but three and two is five :
Shall Five and Four or compromise or strive ?

ABSTINENCE

Shirking the battle. Every morn doth sound
God's trumpet-call : where then shouldst thou be found ?

ENDEAVOUR

Earth gave Antæus, oft as thrown, new force :
Yet Hercules held in the air his corse.





REAL AND TRUE

ONLY the Beautiful is real !
All things of which our life is full,
All mysteries that life enwreathes,
Birth, life, and death,
All that we dread or darkly feel,—
All are but shadows, and the Beautiful
Alone is real.

Nothing but Love is true !
Earth's many lies, whirl'd upon Time's swift wheel,
Shift and repeat their state,—
Birth, life, and death,
And all that they bequeath
Of hope or memory, thus do alternate
Continually ;

Love doth anneal,
 Doth beauteously imbue,
 The wine-cups of the archetypal Fate.

Love, Truth, and Beauty,— all are one !
 If life may expiate
 The wilderings of its dimness, death be known
 But as the mighty ever-living gate
 Into the Beautiful————
 All things flow on
 Into one Heart, into one Melody,
 Eternally.

SHADOWS

THE world goes round and the rain is falling :
 Welladay !
 The world goes round and the rain is falling ;
 Ever the Shadowy Ones are calling—
 Come away !

The world goes round and the leaves are falling
 Every day.

The world goes round and the leaves are falling ;
Autumn weeds are the Spring forestalling ;—
Earth is grey.

The world goes round and Death is calling—
Come away !
The world goes round and Death is calling,
Hour by hour, poor Life appalling.
Welladay !

The world goes round and the stars are falling,
Welladay !
The world goes round and the stars are falling :
All things, God ! unto thee, are calling—
Be our stay !



DEATH

O WELCOME, Death !
 Long have I sought thee thorough trials many ;
 Long, long, and tempted would not be of any :
 Most welcome Death !

Thy foes, O Death !
 Wisdom and Fame, woo'd me ; to my pale lips
 Fond Beauty clung—a cloud too thin to eclipse
 The mooned Death.

O trusty Death !
 Wisdom with cold sneer mocks thy prophecies ;
 And Glory would outbid thy promises :
 Yet welcome, Death !

All hate thee, Death !
 Have not I reason ? thou hast stolen away
 The sunshine of my being :— my sole stay
 Art thou, O Death !

O gentle Death !

Ill things are said of thee : that thou dost rend
The loving hearts, and mocking ever blend
Foul dust with breath.

Belovéd Death !

Men call thee Pain, and say that thou dost fasten
Thy fangs in the heart of Joy : and yet all hasten
To the arms of Death.

Impassion'd Death !

All lovely things pillow them on thy breast :
What seek they ? surer dreams than life, or rest ?
Serenest Death !

O silent Death !

What joy in thy dream-circled home abideth ?
Over the moon-lit face a calm smile glideth.
O silent Death !



A FUNERAL HYMN

WHY are your spirits sad?
 Why is't ye weep,
 When the Weak and Pain-wearied
 Are bosom'd in sleep?
 Hush! lest ye vex the Tired with your rude cries:
 In the calm home of Death there are no agonies.
 Why do ye weep?

Why are your hearts unstrung?
 Why are ye dull?
 Though our Lost was so young,
 And is beautiful.
 Whom God best loveth he first calleth home:
 Wouldst thou detain the summon'd through long
 years to roam,
 To toil and weep?



Why mourn ye thanklessly?
 Toil needeth rest,—
 Pain asketh remedy,—
 'Friends! death is best.'

Better to strew his pillow with green praise
Than pile on his sere heart the snow of evil days !
Then ye might weep.


Mourn not what we have lost !
What hath he won ?
Love ever smileth most.
Where he is gone,
There shall we follow. Joy that he hath gain'd
God's blessed peace so soon, that he is first unchain'd.
How can ye weep ?

Why are your spirits sad ?
He is at rest.
O, be ye calmly glad !
Wrong not the Blest !
What though we see him not, though life is dim ?
Hope sits with us in the shade, bearing one wish from
him—

‘ Friends ! do not weep ! ’



A DIRGE



'SWEETS TO THE SWEET!'

NIGHTINGALE! sing o'er her tomb;
 Forest-flowers! bend o'er her:
 Song to song, and bloom to bloom:
 God's wide universe the dome
 Wherein we adore her.

Let our lives sing o'er her tomb,
 True thoughts blossom o'er her!
 Song to song, and bloom to bloom:
 God smiles through the narrow room,
 White wings float before her.

Soul of song! thou hast no tomb;
 God's own bosom wore her:
 Song of song and Bloom of bloom!—
 Weep not! in the Blessed Doom
 God's love watcheth o'er her.



NIGHT-MUSIC

O NIGHTINGALE! why singest thou in May,
 Amid the tender leaves,
 Unto the crescent moon, in the twilight grey
 Of sultry eves?
 Kissing the pale-brow'd Night with thy low moan,
 When the written song o' the sun is blotted out
 and gone.

O Nightingale! why singest to the moon,
 The full-orb'd moon of May?
 Pouring the fragrance of that pining tune
 Upon the feet of Day;
 Ever from vesper time to near the morn
 Trilling thy sweetest plaint, thou ecstasy forlorn!

O Nightingale! O life so sweetly sad!
 Singing 'mid yellow buds that may not leaf;
 O soul of song! whose noble music had
 Borrow'd its dearest eloquence from grief:—
 O thou broad-fronted Heaven, with thy clear eyes,
 Solve the sad quest of these melodious agonies!

OLD FRIENDS

THE old old friends !
 Some changed ; some buried ; some gone out
 of sight ;
 Some enemies, and in this world's swift fight
 No time to make amends.

The old old friends—
 Where are they ? Three are lying in one grave ;
 And one from the far-off world on the daily wave
 No loving message sends.

The old dear friends !
 One passes daily ; and one wears a mask ;
 Another long estranged cares not to ask
 Where causeless anger ends.

The dear old friends,
 So many and so fond in days of youth !
 Alas that Faith can be divorced from Truth,
 When love in severance ends.

The old old friends !
They hover round me still in evening shades :
Surely they shall return when sunlight fades,
And life on God depends.

THE DIRGE OF LOVE

STREW flowers, for Love is dead !
Flowers with the Morning's tears upon them shed.
Drop them in Love's lone grave,
By Sorrow's ceaseless wave.
For Love is dead !

Not flowers !— or take the crown
Hope in her desperate agony flung down !
Unweave each wither'd stem ;
And idly scatter them
Where Love lies dead !

No flowers, but grey moss'd stones !
Or greyer yet, from heights the lichen owns !
Pile them on Love's lone grave,
By Sorrow's moaning wave,
Now Love is dead !

Fair flowers ! ye bloom no more.
 Grey mountain summits ! ye are clouded o'er.
 Lay neither stones nor flowers,
 But only woeful hours,
 Where Love lies dead !

Not flowers ! but tears instead !
 Love was the flower of life—— and Love is dead.
 Pile up no record stones !
 For Sorrow ever moans
 Where Love lies dead.

NOUGHT

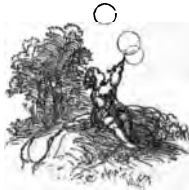
HOPE and fear are nought to me,—
 Even despair outwears its sting ;
 Fear is whelm'd in certainty,—
 Hope, far from me wandering,
 Rests where Love may be :
 Sorrow sleepeth at my side,
 Like the veil'd corse of a bride,—
 Ever calmly smileth she :
 Earthly hope is not for me.—
 Woe is me !

Hope and fear are nought to me,
 Throned o'er Time and Circumstance
 In desolation's majesty ;
 Evil-tiding and Mischance
 Dare not look on Me.
 O'er the world the pilgrim fareth ;
 To the grave Love's cross he beareth :
 Pity clingeth tearfully.
 Hope and fear are nought to me :
 Woe is me !



HOPE

POOOR HOPE sate on a grave, a very child,
 Blowing her rainbow bubbles ; as she cast
 Each one in the air, it broke. Yet still she smiled
 Upon the latest one. 'Look ! this will last.'



GONE

WILL the dead Hours come again,
 From the arms of the buried Years?
 Though we call, we call in vain,
 And they will not heed our tears.
 Why, O why were they slain
 By thy fears?

Will the dead Love e'er return,
 For all thy late desire?
 Can thy grief unclothe Love's urn,
 Or make of the ashes— fire;
 Though the cinders yet may burn
 Round the pyre?

Alas and alas for the Gone!
 We mourn and we mourn in vain.
 Like a ghost, or the dreamy tone
 Of some long-forgotten strain,
 Their memory haunts the Lone
 But with pain.

TO THE WEST WIND

O SWEET West Wind ! thou breathést on my brow :
 O dear West Wind ! thou comést from my home.
 O heedless Wind ! had I been free as thou
 To stay or go, I had not cared to roam.

O glad West Wind ! what bringest thou from Her ?
 Thy breath is fragrant with her plaint to thee.
 What message hast thou from the weary stir
 Of that lone heart which ever beats for me ?

O happy Wind ! love-laden with her sighs :
 What dreamy kisses layest thou on my brow ?
 O sad West Wind !— sad, sad, and most unwise :
 A fugitive like me— an exile now.



LITERÆ SCRIPTÆ

WORDS, loving words, since kisses can not be !
 Words, passionate words that echo past delight !
 O Love ! whose sun is absent, give to me
 Some starry memories to cheat my night !

Words, loving words ! repeat that thou art mine !
 Words, burning words ! to warm my heart so cold,
 Iced in this polar distance, where I pine
 For summer and its splendours manifold.

Words, fiery words ! a pentecost of flame :
 Words, tongued fire ! to comfort my despair :
 Crowning my brow with every passion'd name,—
 Electric sparks from Phoibos' golden hair.

Words, star-like words ! each word a globe of fire !
 My Sun-god hath departed : life is dim.
 Words ! words ! a heaven of stars !—— O fond Desire !
 The starriest night is darkness, wanting Him.



FALSE HOPE

GOD save me from mine enemy !
 I pray we ne'er may meet again.
 She has been worse than foe to me :
 And yet, if we should meet again
 I should believe her, to my bane.

She has been worse than foe to me,
 With promised love and present pain,
 Till love seem'd only injury,
 And troth was known to be in vain :
 I did believe her, to my bane.

Her clear eyes look'd so lovingly,
 She clung with such a hearty strain,
 Her lips— O God ! so sweet to me—
 Left upon mine a poison blain :
 I did believe her, to my bane.

She has been worse than foe to me :
 Yet I should love her o'er again
 If we should meet— dear Injury !
 Men call her Hope,— but she is Pain.
 Pray God we may not meet again.

VAIN COUNSEL

CEASE to love ! since all thy wooing
 Can not win her, cease pursuing !
 Cease thy loving all so gainless !
 Cease, since love can not be painless !
 Love not to thine own undoing !

Cease to love love so uncaring !
 Cease a love she is not sharing !
 Cease to love whose love is fickle !
 Fling aside thy broken sickle !
 Why should one reap but despairing ?

Cease rejected vows to tender !
 Cease ! thy worthless hope surrender !
 Cease to love !—— But words are idle.
 Will could never yet Love bridle :
 Love struck mad with loving splendour.

FOOT-PRINTS

THERE are days of our lives that lie on the past
Like the prints of bleeding feet :
But the heart's wayfaring records last,
Though Hope and Joy may meet.
Never effaced by the summer rain,
Those marks must aye remain.

Look not back, thou Unhappy One !
For the blood will blind thine eyes ;
Look not down on thy feet ; begone
From the track of agonies.
Leave to the past the things of the past :
For, alas ! those marks must last.



TO HIS LOVE

WHO HAD UNJUSTLY REBUKED HIM

GENTLE as Truth, and zealous even as Love—
 Which is the fiercest of all earthly things ;
 Frank, and yet using caution as a glove
 To guard the skin from foulnesses or stings,—
 Giving the bare hand surely to the true :
 Such would I be, to make me worthy you.

Bitter sometimes, as wholesome tonics are ;
 Wrathful as Justice in her earnest mood ;
 Scornful as Honour is, yet not to bar
 Appreciation of the lowest good ;
 Loathing the vile, the cruel, the untrue :
 How should my manhood else be worthy you ?

Say I am subtil, fierce, and bitter-tongued :
 Love is all this, and yet Love is beloved.
 But say not that I wilfully have wrong'd
 Even those whose hate and falsehood I have proved.
 Who say this know me not, and never knew
 What I would be, but to be worthy you.

BEGINNINGS

A SMALL small seed, and of no account,—
 'Twas a chance if it would grow :
 In a deep rock crevice a hidden fount,—
 Mere drops, too few to flow.



Now the seed is a spreading upas tree,
 No joy can live beneath :
 And that fount has flooded love's pleasant lea
 With the dark deep tide of death.

LOVE'S TALISMAN

THOU say'st—'Will thy love last?' Look through
 the years ;
 Behold where Change still sleepeth with the dust
 On his closed eye-lids. Let not thy vain fears
 Awaken him ! Love's talisman is trust.



THE WOUNDED KNIGHT

LET me rest ! the fight is over ; I am smitten unto death.

Leave me ! I shall be unwounded by the worst the foeman saith :

Foeman's taunts no more can move him whom his friend dishonoureth.

O, 'tis thou hast struck my spirit, stabb'd me in the thickest fight

With thy doubt most false and cruel : thou and I had else such might,

That all odds had fallen before us, strong in brotherhood and right.

Thou didst hold thy shield before me ; when my sword-point as of old

Cover'd thee, thou lookedst on me with a smile so scornful cold,

Saying— 'Henceforth I will guard me with an arm that is not sold.'

Thou spakest plainly, roundly chargedst me with a
treason unconceived ;

Badest me turn my sword against thee, only so to be
believed ;

Smotest me with a vile suspicion never more to be
retrieved.

So I fell, fell fighting madly, without thee to shield
my life ;

All unused to fight dishonour'd, rushing blindly to
the strife :

So fell, stabb'd to the heart,— O friendliest ! stabb'd,
and by no foeman's knife.

Leave me now ! thy pity hurts me. Thou wilt think
that thou wert wrong :

Thou wilt think ?— O, henceforth rest thee in thy
false assurance strong :

No such wound be thine as speeds me this dark flood
of grief along !

Yet, true friend ! thou didst not falsely, thou by
treacherous words beguiled.

Closer ! thy true tears fall on me ! closer !— my words
too were wild :

My death-smile would whisper to thee— how our love
is reconciled.

TEARS

WEEP ! weep bitter tears ! for thy friends
Are the Dead and the Overthrown
And the Sacrificed : God lends
Such help to the Lone.

Weep ! weep bitter tears ! for thy friends
Are the Friendless : what art thou ?
How silently each yellow leaf wends
From the wither'd bough.

Weep desperate tears ! in the tomb
Build thy palace brave !
A sure friend and a certain home
There alone thou may'st have.



WATCHING

O I am weary, watching for thy coming,—
And yet thou comést not ;
Day after day my weary feet are roaming
To that dear spot
Where thou didst bless me with those words so vain—
'We soon shall meet again.'

My soul is worn with prayer for thy returning,
And yet thou dost not come ;
All through the long long night the lamp is burning
In thy lone home,—
Thy home, my heart, where echo yet in vain
Thy words— 'We meet again.'



A ROMANCE

‘O SISTER! leave your broidery-frame;
 Come to the window, Dear!
 Be quick: I hear them shout his name;
 The music draweth near.’——
 She leaneth o’er her broidery-frame,
 Her tears are dropping fast;
 She heedeth not the glad acclaim,
 Nor the triumph thronging past.

‘O Sister! look,—how grand they ride;
 Come to the window, Sweet!
 Be quick: the king is at his side,
 They’re coming down the street.’——
 She leaneth o’er her broidery-frame,
 Her tears are dropping fast;
 She heedeth not the pomp of fame,
 Nor the banners flaunting past.

‘The sun smiles on their blazonry:
 Come, Dear! or they’ll be gone.
 Be quick—his eyes are seeking me,—
 My own Victorious One!’——

She lifts her brow ; 'tis flush'd with shame ;
 ' He was my wooer last.'
She lieth dead by her broidery-frame,
 Ere the knight hath ridden past.

PARTING

(*From the French*)

NOT a penny left, and you know in such a case
You have but to leave me, Darling ! and—it's
 easy to forget.

One kiss, one look again into your bonny face,
And we part, we part for ever—— But your eyes
 are wet.

It is nought, dear ! we have pass'd a many happy days,
To say nothing of our nights ; but days and
 nights *are* past.

Could they have been more lasting—— But the pro-
verb soothly says——

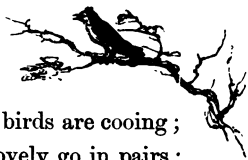
The very best of joys are those which may not
 last.





VALENTINE'S DAY

SOME young urchin, shamming lonely,
 Writes on 'gilt-edged superfine'
 To some unknown charmer, only—
 'Be thou, Darling! ever mine';
 Draws a heart, with arrow-skewer,—
 'So Love hath transfix'd me thine.'
 Never recipe was truer
 For a perfect Valentine.



Birds are billing, birds are cooing;
 All things lovely go in pairs:
 We are willing, why not wooing,
 When sweet Spring comes unawares?
 Very cold though is this spring-time,
 Snow on every tiny spray;
 Better wait some happier ring-time:
 Valentine! put off thy day.



Ho, Saint Valentine so simple,
 Sadly simple Valentine,
 All so earnest for a dimple
 And a smile that meets not thine !
 Gentle Love ! do not deceive me :
 Is thy heart quite throughly mine,
 And the arrow barb'd ? Believe me
 Thine own faithful Valentine.




MIND YOUR KNITTING

(*After Béranger*)

LUCY ! mind your knitting :
 Blind as I may be,
 I am certain you're not sitting
 At your work by me.—
 'Tis so hot this April weather.'—
 Is it cooler where
 You and Robert sit together ?
 You are idling there.
 Lucy ! mind your knitting.





Lucy ! mind your knitting :

You have left your seat.

Tell me where again you're flitting :

Those are not your feet.—

'Tis the cat that you hear moving.'—

You speak false to me :

I'd like Robert better loving

You more openly.

Lucy ! mind your knitting.

Lucy ! mind your knitting ;

Lucy ! have a fear :

Some day Robert will be quitting——

Ah ! she does not hear.


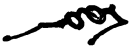
These young folk will still be scorning

All we old folk say ;

They will never heed our warning

While their playmates stay.

Lucy ! mind your knitting.



TWO FABLES



POT AND KETTLE



‘**W**IPE out that black stain, naughty Sister Pot!’
 ‘You’re just as foul, Dame Kettle!’ Pot
 replied.

’Twas nicely mean’d by each. And yet, God wot,
 Some scouring had done more on either side.

PLATE AND JUG

SAYS Plate—‘You are narrow and thin;
 And, poor Jug! I abominate that.’
 Jug replies—‘You may call it a sin :
 But, my dear ! I’m not shallow and flat.’




MAIDEN WISDOM

IT is so hard to keep my lover in his sorrow,
When, O Love! this very moment I would pine
to make him blest.
O wisest Mother! tell me, wherefore say To-morrow,
When there on the threshold waits my heart's
expected guest?

Tell me, dear Mother! tell me, wherefore test him
with denial,
When I know that he is true, for I would give
him life or death?
Is there need to prove his honour? Is there any need
of trial
When he tells me that he loves me and I listen
with rapt breath?

When I answer, as you bade me, that he had best be
waiting
Till proofs of love's reality and persistence can be
had,



Then he laughing says— 'The birds are less cautious
in their mating' ;

Or his eyelids droop so sadly that my darken'd
heart is sad.

Be sure he's earnest, Mother ! very true and pure and
loving ;

Could you see his heart as I do, you would say I
might be sure :

And he looks, O so imploringly,—— Even is there
need of proving,

I would rather say— Dear Lover ! I can trust you
to endure.





LET the purple wine o'erbrim the golden beaker,
Pouring o'er the Bacchant's richly sculptured
there ;

Never cease thy song-stream, eloquentest speaker !
Ne'er, till all believe, thy sweet discoursing spare.

Quickly pour the wine from out the fruit-lipp'd beaker ;
Whisper to us, Bacchus ! how this life is fair ;
Speak out roundly, Wine-god ! fortunatest seeker !
Thou most true bliss-finder ! tell us how and
where.

Let again the flood o'erbrim the perfect beaker ;
Lift our hearts, Ascender ! make our lives thy
care ;

Yet, yet once more bless—— Thy voice is growing
weaker——

Bless us with those ripe lips, on this heaven-stair.



WHAT I HATE

I HATE cant,
 And I hate a 'plant,'
 And humbug I hate altogether ;
 And I hate a lie,
 And treachery,
 Worse than the foulest weather.

And as much as I can
 Ever hate a man,
 I hate one with a voice unpleasant,
 With a mouth most greedy
 And an eye unsteady :
 Him I hate, as a snare the pheasant.

I hate rich fools,
 And I hate sham schools,
 And I hate the pretence of passion ;
 And I hate foul words,
 And swine and swineherds,
 Though Pork be the height of the fashion.

I hate weak rhymes—
 Though I use them at times ;
 And I hate all the baseness of evil ;
 And I hate some things more
 Even worse than a bore,—
 And a bore I hate worse than the Devil.



TRIADS

THREE things that are gone for ever
 When once they have pass'd away :
 A man's and a woman's honour
 And the life of Yesterday !

The last in our dreams returneth—
 Though the wakening doubles pain ;
 But, however the sad heart yearneth,
 Lost honour is sought in vain.

Two things that can never be mended
 By penance or prayer or power :
 The trust in a broken promise,
 The growth of a sever'd flower !



And a third that is yet more tender—
The hope of our trustful years :
Like the autumn's morning splendour,
Gone— gone in a waste of tears.

Three more should endure for ever :
The strength of a heavenward song,
The heart of a brave endeavour,
The pardon that meeteth wrong !

And three should be ever exhaustless—
Ay ! four,— though the heavens depart :
True effort and faith and mercy
And the love of a loving heart.

SWEET GALE

THE sweet South Wind once underground was
frozen,
And only growth to save her could avail.
She grew up through a plant ; the plant so chosen
We call in our North Country the Sweet Gale.




AN HOUR OF ROBIN HOOD

O FOR an hour with Robin Hood, deep, deep in the
 forest green,
 With fern and budding bramble waving o'er me as a
 screen,

In mid noon shade,
 Where the hot-breath'd Trade
 Came never the boughs between.

O for an hour of Robin Hood, and the brave health
 of the free,
 Out of the noisome smoke to where the earth breathes
 fragrantly,
 Where heaven is seen,
 And the smile serene
 Of heavenliest liberty.

O for the life of Robin Hood, to wander an outlaw
 free
 Rather than crawl in the market-place of human
 slavery :



Better with men
In the wildest glen,
Than palaced with Infamy.

My life for a breath of Robin Hood, with the arrow
before my eye
And a tyrant but within bow-shot reach : how gladly
could I die
With the fame of Tell,
With Robin so well
Embalm'd in history.

O but to rest, like Robin Hood, beneath some forest-
green,
Where the wild-flowers of the coming spring on my
mouldering heart may lean ;
For England's sword
Is trampled hard
With the journeyings of the Mean.



EMIGRANTS

WE'LL not forget you, Mother !
 In the land that's far away ;
 We'll think of you, dear ! at our work,
 And bless you when we pray.
 Look cheerly, that your smile may be
 Before me night and day,
 On our long journey o'er the sea,
 To the land that's far away.
 Stay those sobs of woe ;
 Smooth thine hair so grey :
 'Twill wring my heart to see thee so,
 In the land that's far away.



You'll tend the white rose, Mother !
 On our little Nelly's grave :
 I can not help these foolish tears,—
 And yet I'm very brave.
 And you'll take care of Tom's dog, poor thing !
 And Nelly's skylark, too ;
 And think, whene'er you hear him sing,
 He sings of us to you.

Nay ! look calmly, do !
Mother, Mother ! pray :
How will I bear to dream of you
In the land that's far away ?

We'll write so often, Mother !
And Father— he can read ;
And you'll get some neighbour write to us,
To say if you're in need.
And tell us how you bear the cold,
If Father's lameness mends :
Dear life ! he's not so very old ;
And God will bring you friends.
O this parting pain !
Mother, darling ! pray
Let me see you smile again,
Before I go away !

We'll save our earnings, Mother !
To help your failing years ;
And some day come back to you, love !
And kiss away your tears.
Who knows but we may send for you ?
You'll live to see that day :
O, Mother darling ! bear it through,
While we are far away.

Stay those sobs of woe !
Smooth thine hair so grey !
'Twill wring my heart to leave thee so,
In the land that's far away.

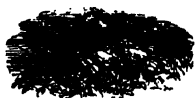
THE SONG OF THE PAUPER

SPRING cometh to the world ;
Spring cometh not to me :
There is no Spring in the poor-house yard,
For the prison'd Misery.
The fond Spring whispereth :
The merry birds are singing ;
The chime o' the flowers is ringing :—
But mine is prison breath.

Spring shouteth jubilee :
The pauper may not fare
From the closeness of his winter ward
Into the fragrant air.
Spring loosens the frozen earth ;
The forests their free arms are flinging
Abroad : to me are clinging
Death and the rule of dearth.

Spring smileth : the free birds mate ;
 The free flower blossometh :—
The home of the pauper is desolate ;
 The grave-weed is his wreath.
There is no smile for me ;
 No child to my life is clinging ;
 Though the buds on the moors are springing,
I have no family.

Spring cometh to the world ;
 Spring giveth life to all :
O, when shall the Spring of poor Human-kind
 Proclaim its festival ?
The fond Spring whispereth :
 The merry birds are singing ;
 The chime o' the flowers is ringing :—
But mine is prison breath.




RICH AND POOR

IN the softly carpeted and richly furnish'd room
 Young life hath enjoyment, as a flower its bloom ;
 Broidering some pretty toy the dainty fingers ply
 An easy task, 'mid pleasant hours, in very luxury.

On the bare floor, in the attic, where cold winds drive
 through,
 Young life withers sadly, wanting all its due ;
 Broidering some gorgeous robe for wealthy dame to
 wear,
 Slowly weary fingers labour,—pleasure smiles not
 there.

In the mansion child and maiden know all life's
 delight ;
 Child and maiden homed with Squalor live in sorry
 plight.

Yet the mansion and the hovel are not far apart ;
 Under rags or satin beats the human heart ;



And the child, on floor or carpet, hopes, desires, and fears ;

And the rich lass than the poorest hath no pearlier tears.

Tell your children that God made them brethren,
sisters, all,

Born in even a manger or baronial hall ;

Teach them what the Poor Man taught the rich long
time ago,

How all of us are God's children, be we ne'er so low.

Little children ! learn the lesson : wheresoe'er you be,
Love and loving help each other, truly, tenderly.

UNSEEN WORTH

A SINGLE drop of rain fell from the skies :
None saw it, on that day so bright and fair.
It slid into the ground, and nourish'd there
The acorn of an oak to live for centuries.



GOD'S MARTYRS

THE glorious roll of martyr names—
 The angels of our earth,—
 Our hearts beat high when praise proclaims
 That constellated Worth ;
 But in the shade of Time there lies
 A tomb Love stoopeth o'er,
 To read— ' The Scorn'd of Histories,
 The Nameless Martyr Poor.'

The Poor, the unthank'd labour-worn,
 Who all unnoticed died,—
 The Toilers trampled down by scorn
 Upon the world's wayside !
 Tell out the starry names that gem
 God's heaven ! The sanded shore
 Is countless : who shall number them—
 The silent-suffering Poor !

The world shall never know their names,
 Nor Fame recount their deeds ;

They had no high heroic aims,
Nor strain'd at lofty needs :
They were but men of common mould,
Yet royal crowns they wore :
What though their trials be untold ?
God's Martyrs are the Poor.

They toil'd, they died,— Oblivion trod
Above the dust of Slaves :
Yet reach'd they hero-souls to God
From out the lowliest graves.
And yet a glorious shrine we'll raise
Their buried memories o'er,
Where reverent ages long shall praise
The scarce-remember'd Poor.

THE PALACE


ILL-BUILT, dim-window'd, many a broken tile,—
A king dwells here, kings are his visitors.
Which is the palace ? This ? or yonder pile
Where crowned Meanness hides, past all its golden
doors ?

NATURE'S GENTLEMAN

(*To James Watson*)

HE boasts nor wealth nor high descent, yet he may
 claim to be
 A gentleman to match the best of any pedigree :
 His blood hath run in peasant veins through many a
 noteless year ;
 Yet, search in every prince's court, you'll rarely find
 his peer.
 For he's one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every
 time.

He owns no mansion in the Square, inherits no estate ;
 He hath no stud, no hounds, no duns, no lacqueys at
 his gate ;
 He drinks no wine, and wears no gloves, his coat is
 thread-bare worn :
 Yet he's a gentleman no less, and he was gentle born.
 He is one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every
 time.



His manners are not polish'd, he has never learn'd to
bow :

But his heart is gentle,— gentle manner out of it doth
grow,

Like a flower whose fragrance blesseth all within its
beauteous reach,

Or the dainty bloom upon a plum, or the softness of a
peach.

For he's one of Nature's gentle ones, the best of every
time.

He takes small pains to smoothe his words to fit a
courtly phrase ;

And he would scorn to file his soul for even royal
praise ;

And he has wrath too when the proud the gentle-
soul'd distress :

He's not the form— gentility, but very gentleness.

Ay ! one of Nature's gentle men, the best of every
time.

As true old Chaucer sang to us, so many years ago,

He is the gentlest man who dares the gentlest deeds to
do :

However rude his birth or state, however low his
place,

He is the gentle man whose life right gentle thought
doth grace.

He is one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every
time.

What though his hand is hard and rough with years
of honest pains,—

Who ever thought the knight disgraced by honour's
weather-stains?

What though no Heralds' College in their books his
line can trace,—

We can see that he is gentle by the smile upon his
face.

For he's one of Nature's Gentlemen, the best of every
time.



THE HAPPY LAND

THE Happy Land !

Studded with cheerful homesteads, fair to see,
With garden grace and household symmetry :
How grand the wide-brow'd peasant's lordly mien,
The matron's smile serene !

O happy, happy Land !

The Happy Land !

Half-hid in the dewy grass the mower blithe
Sings to the day-star as he whets his scythe ;
And to his babes at eventide again
Carols as blithe a strain.

O happy, happy Land !

The Happy Land !

Where in the golden sheen of autumn eves
The bright hair'd children play among the sheaves ;
Or gather ripest apples all the day,
As ruddy-cheek'd as they.

O happy, happy Land !

O Happy Land !

The thin smoke curleth through the frosty air ;
The light smiles from the windows : hearken there
To the white grandsire's tale of heroes old,
To flame-eyed listeners told.

O happy, happy Land !

O Happy, Happy Land !

The tender-foliaged alders scarcely shade
Yon loitering lover and glad blushing maid.
O happy Land ! the spring that quickens thee
Is human liberty.

O happy, happy Land !



PRAYER

LET us pray ! Our prayer be truthful !
 L Fervent and effectual thought
 Is a spirit strong and youthful,
 Whose desire in deed is wrought.
 Let us pray !

Let us pray ! Our hope be daring !
 Prayer is an eternal seed,—
 Germ of will, and sure of bearing
 Energetic, zealous deed.
 Let us pray !

Let us pray ! And prayer is action :
 Prayer ! thou art a hero-sword.
 Rive the battle ; make no paction
 Until Victory own thee lord !
 Let us pray !

Let us pray ! as prays the sower,—
 Pray we as the soldier prays !
 Though our harvest may be slower,
 Though in heaven we reap the bays.
 Let us pray !

TRIUMPH

WORK can never miss its wages.
 One wide song rings through the ages :
Ever loss true gain presages.

Not alone that flowers are blowing
 Over graves,— that bread is growing
 In warm tears from heaven flowing,—

That old Winter Spring-seed hiveth ;
 Ever Death Creation wiveth,
 And God's Love the tempest driveth.

Let the conqueror blush for winning !
 Little worth his conquest-sinning :
 They who lose are so beginning.

Through the years one chorus ringeth :
 The death-chaunt the martyr singeth
 Is the root whence victory springeth.

In the Desert sink the Weary,—
 Dry their pitcher ; angels near ye,—
 Ishmael ! Arab empires hear thee.

Joseph by his brethren barter'd
Hath his full revenge : the Martyr'd
Egypt ruled and Israel charter'd.

Round the ark the river gushes,—
All is lost ; amid the rushes
Pharaoh's Daughter, dawn-like, blushes.

Calvary's complete surrender
Is of utmost conquest tender,
And its gloom intensest splendour.

What though Ruin cometh faster,
Look thou God-ward through disaster :
' In this sign thou shalt be master !'

Ever hangs 'twixt earth and heaven
Victory's Victor, unforgiven,
Crown'd with thorn and earthquake-riven.

Ever the same chorus ringeth :
From his cross the martyr flingeth
Wide the seed whence victory springeth.

Ever through the book of ages
The same echoes close the pages :
Ever loss true gain presages.



AFTER A DEFEAT

YET we labour, ever hoping,
 Though misfortune mocks endeavour;
 Down disaster's desperate sloping
 Yet we struggle, hoping ever,—
 Wearily.

Even as the stream is flowing
 To the sea with ceaseless motion,
 Never wave its current knowing,
 Pass our lives to sorrow's ocean,
 Ceaselessly.

Weep'st thou, Hope! unhappy mother,
 O'er thy dead child, Misery?
 Let us sit by one another,
 And our moan shall echo thee
 Drearly.

Yet, though Hope herself be dying
 In despite of Love and Glory,
 Our crush'd lives beside her lying
 Should maintain the same high story,
 Steadfastly.

Yet, O Hope ! thy ghost shall lead us
Through the graves of Time's commotion,
Till the Eternal Watchers heed us,
Till they give to our devotion
Victory.

TRY AGAIN

THE coldest hours are close upon the morn ;
Night ever neareth day :
Up, man ! and wrestle yet again with Scorn ;
Each footstep is a fall,—move on thy way !
Try again !

Is baffled beaten ? Will the hero fail
Flung down beneath a wall ?
Another ladder ! Let our comrades scale
The top o'er us piled stair-like as we fall !
Try again !

O Hope forlornest, masked like Despair !
Truth must some day succeed.
Thy failure proves——What ?—Thy once failing there.
Fail yet again if there be martyr need !
Try again !

COURAGE

FROM the martyr-dust before thee,
 From the pinnacles of Fame,
 From the heavens bending o'er thee,
 Aye the Voices are the same :
 ' Courage ! we too have borne trial ' ;
 ' Courage ! if thou would'st aspire ' ;
 ' Courage ! Fate hath no denial,—
 Through her ordeal of fire.'

Courage,— valour active-hearted :
 Like a charmed sword, to be
 Never from the hero parted
 Even in last extremity :
 Sword that well can shield its master,
 Sword to lead the battle's front,—
 Keen to rive the worst disaster,
 Strong to ward despairing brunt.

Patience,— for the sick man's wearing,
 For the spirit-broken slave :

Knighly tool is noble daring,
Though his threshold be a grave.
Courage : neither fierce nor tardy,
Lightning-swift if storm must be,
Bold indeed, but not fool-hardy,—
Feeling God's sure hand on thee.

Voices from the Martyr Ages,
Voices from the Heights of Fame,
Heaven and Earth— God's open pages,
Ever speak to thee the same :
Lone and worn and disappointed,
Wounded, dying, night and day,
Art thou one of Faith's Anointed,
Thou shalt echo what they say.

THE PEARL

BUT one of God's good angels hast thou known :
Disease. And would'st thou treat him like
a churl ?

Be wise and thankful ! From disease is grown
The Pearl.

SAD QUESTIONING

WHY is it so? O God!
 The old old cry :
 As in impatient youth,
 So now, our years gone by,
 When thy afflictive rod
 Would teach us truth.

Why is it so? O Power!
 The rocks are bare
 With wasting streams; our lives
 Are wasted by despair :
 In some far vale the flower
 Of the future thrives.

Why is it so? O God!
 The old vain cry
 That asketh thee to spare.
 What is it that we die?
 Green sod and then green sod
 Thy way prepare.

MIDWINTER

MIDWINTER comes to-morrow,
 My welcome guest to be :
 White-hair'd, wide-winged Sorrow,
 With Christinas gifts for me.
 Thy angel, Gōd !— I thank thee still.
 Thy will be done—— Thy better will !

I thank thee, Lord !— the whiteness
 Of winter on my heart
 Shall keep some glint of brightness,
 Till sun and stars depart.
 Thou smilést on the snow : Thy will
 Is dread and drear, but lovely still.



GAUDIAMUS IGITUR

AY! the road is very lonesome, very rugged, very
steep :

See yon cheerful flowers before us,
While the summer sun high o'er us
His bright way doth keep :

Gaudiamus igitur !

In the fierce noon fades the flower ; now the storm
bursts overhead :

Look, how beautiful the lightning,—
Like some proud life's courage brightening
In the depths of dread :

Gaudiamus igitur !

Starless night, the worn wayfarer ploddeth on through
sleety rain :

Has thy soul no starry glory ?
Was the lamp of hero story
Given thee in vain ?

Gaudiamus igitur !



Thou art poor, and joy is costly ; simplest happiness
so dear :

What's a brave smile's market value ?

What laugh-dealer may forestall you ?

Never stint thy cheer !

Gaudiamus igitur !

At the death-bed of thy brother, over the beloved
tomb :

Grief by memory's flash be riven !

Look on Love star-throned in heaven !

Joy again hath room :

Gaudiamus igitur !

TIME'S GIFTS

TIME hath two blessings for mankind : the first
Is earthly joy ;

He gives the second even to the most accurst,—

Rest from annoy.



CHANGE

O'ER the hills another dawn advances ;
 Yesterday is past. Is Past untrue ?
 The grave-stones of its changes and its chances
 Are the triumphal pavement of the New.

And To-day toward the western billows
 Passeth even as Yesterday did pass.
 Morrow morns will smile on human pillows ;
 Morrow evenings gild the churchyard grass.

Yet Life overliveth tides and chances ;
 Yet Truth groweth stronger and more true ;
 Reverence shrines the Old, while Faith advances
 Ever on and on from New to New.



SELF-JUSTIFICATION

SATAN was not the Devil because he fell,
 But for his pride in falling— when he said
 Evil ! be thou my good : to err is well.
 Self-justification is his devilhead.

THE ADVENT OF PEACE

OVER the red field strode an armed knight :
 Men knew him not ; but when the fray did cease,
 God's Angel stoop'd to bless Victorious Right,
 And bade the hero's name thenceforth be Peace.




I can answer from Thy teaching :— Love is Genius'
only ark ;
Will is but a blinded athlete, straining God-ward in
the dark,
Without Love to point endeavour, like an arrow to its
mark.

Say that love of the unworthy doth degrade to lower
needs ;
Thou art but misusing language. Love from Beauty
aye proceeds ;
Love is Worship of the Worthy, can have no unworthy
heeds.

Matters not or man or woman. Love of Beauty, like
a flame,
Ever heavenward aspireth,— there is no diviner aim ;
Faith, Devotion to the Eternal— Love and these are
still the same.

Be it of the Divine or Human, Love pursueth one
emprize—
One, whate'er the priest, the altar, or the form of
sacrifice :
Truth is none the less resplendent beaming from a
woman's eyes.



Never may the world be ransom'd till this Word be
understood :

Love is Genius' strength and conscience ; Love is
Will's sustaining food,

And his guide across the desert, and his crown upon
the rood.

Love is holiest gospel ever.— Thy pale beauty, like a
star,

Lights me to the steps of glory where the restless
angels are :

As thy radiance, Mother Blessed ! led the Magi from
afar.



TWO STORIES OF ONE FATE

I

TAKE him,—love him, Sister!—love him dearly
for my sake.

If your love should ever fail him, O be sure my heart
would break.

It is not breaking now,—believe me! though my
tears rain down so fast:


You shall soon have sunshine through them of a joy
that aye will last.

Yes, indeed I love him dearly. Could I help it?
Sister mine!

Who could refuse to love him, so lovely, so divine?

I will not blush for saying—I did yearn for love of
him.

Is my cheek still burning? dear one! But my eyes
no more are dim.



I do, do love him. Never I deny that holy love.
I love him more than life and joy, all selfish hope
above.
That I love him is my reason, dear ! for laying on
your heart
My Darling,—since I found his life was of your life
a part.

You will love him as I love him ; with a love too past
my might,—
For I know through all his silentness your love is his
delight.
Love's eyes are very keen, Love's heart has little need
of words :
And I can read your heart and his and all their sweet
accords.

Love him, love him dearly, Sister ! life hath not too
many days.
Why these tears ? And I am smiling. For my glad
heart fills with praise
To God, who gives us love's best blessing,—to assure
the Loved One's bliss—
I with my soul's devotedness, and thou—with thy
life-kiss.

2

THY hand, my friend ! I claim again the brother's
trusting hand :

Though if you dared to call her yours I'd slay you
where you stand.

She is not yours, nor mine ; but we are wholly, humbly
hers,

Her knights, her lieges, her true friends, her trusty
servitors.

Thou canst not love her more than I. Is this the only
right,


For life and death I grapple thee, and mock thy
utmost might.

Take all the odds of honour that my love of thee e'er
gave,

I'd overstride thee, wast thou king and I Love's
meanest slave.

Thou canst not love her more than I. It is no claim
at all.

Her own will is our only law, whatever may befall.



Till then upon this worthy field against thee I
contend——

Hath she spoken so? God help me! I will not be
false, my friend!

And look that thou be loyal, for I love her none the
less;

See that thy very nobleness her every hope may bless.
Shouldst thou fail her in one tittle—— Grasp me
firmly! Words are vain.

She loves thee: who could fail upon the very heart of
gain?

And thou wilt let me love her still, in duteous, lowly
guise:

Watching before thy happy gate, lest evil may surprize:
Asking no wages but thy trust, and one approving
glance

From eyes—— dear eyes!—— Thy hand, great friend!
I bless thy happy chance.



A HOMILY

WHY hath God led thy noble beauty hither ?
 To lay upon my heart, a gather'd flower,
 Through the brief time of passion ; then to wither,
 And drop away upon my coffin'd hour ?

Is human life nought but a lusty living,
 A day of pleasure nighted by the grave,
 With no hereafter dawning, no forgiving
 Of all the eternal hopes our spirits crave ?

Is love the mere lamp of a wanton chamber,
 Whose walls are grave-stones, ne'er so finely hid ?
 Is all the height where Love and Hope can clamber,
 Alas ! no higher than our coffin-lid ?

Is Love a fool for all its future-yearning ?
 Wise only in the drunkenness of bliss ?
 Is there no flame divine within us burning ?
 Is Hope betray'd so cheaply with a kiss ?

Why hath God led thy noble beauty hither?
Why doth celestial light inform thine eyes?
Is it to guide the lone wayfarer? Whither?
The Star of the East hangs not o'er Paradise.

Some girl with delicate skin and golden tresses,
And eyes that float in their voluptuous light,
Holding her boy-adorer in the jesses
Of her caprice, staying his spirit's flight,

Smoothing his folded pinions with light fingers,
Kissing his vigour to a pleasant swoon,
Until the God sunk in the Dreamer lingers
Fondly beside her for the frailest boon,—

Is this the highest end of all thy beauty?
O noble woman! art thou but a girl?
Hast thou no thought of all the scope of duty?
No aim beyond the fingering of a curl?

Why hath God made thee beautiful and loving?
Only to bear the bacchanal cup of life?
Cup-bearing Hebe! seek thou Jove's approving:
O Beauty! be thou Strength's diviner wife.

WHAT LOVE IS

THOU bidd'st me tell thee what love really is.
 Not the mere toying of a boy and girl,—
 She kissing his fair brow, and he a curl :
 Love is not this.

Thou bidd'st me tell thee what love really is. .
 Not the mere mingling of most passionate breath :
 There are who *have* the Loved to very death,
 And yet love miss.

Thou bidd'st me tell thee what love really is.
 Not hope nor having : whoso love forget
 Love's joy in their great task— to pay love's debt,—
 Not paid with a kiss..

How shall I tell thee what love really is ?
 O Love ! thy merest trifle is delight ;
 And passion's hell or heaven is infinite
 In bale or bliss.

How shall I tell thee what love really is ?
 O Perfect Beauty ! let my worship be
 The happiest bloom of thy eternity.
 True love is this.

LOVE'S TRINITY

JUSTICE, Love, and Faith are one :
 Love resumeth all the three :

Justice— love for what is done,—
 Love— the present royalty,—
 Faith— the love of what shall be.

Justice vindicates the Past :
 Keeps its truth from dying with
 The formal life that could not last ;
 Still maintains the central pith
 And the essence of the myth.

Faith is Love of the Unseen,
 Of the Future beyond sight :
 Faith, above the sky serene
 Of present Love, with tireless flight
 Cleaves the clouded Infinite.

Love is Truth and Faith in one,—
 Love is life's true harmony :
 There was Truth in what is gone,
 Though it seem not ; there shall be
 New Truth to eternity.

Justice, Love, and Faith, are One—
 Love, the perfect Trinity :
 Love is just to what is gone ;
 Love, aye present unto Thee,
 Trusteth to futurity.



MARRIED

O LIFE, O destiny complete !
 The sunder'd halves come home again.
 So long, so long the yearning twain
 Have sought each other : now they meet.

We will not say again our lives :
 It is one life henceforth for aye.
 Though we may wander far away,
 It is one soul that hopes and strives.

It is one soul our life informs,—
 It is one life that we shall lead,—
 One hope is ours, one will, one creed :
 Ye can not part us, all ye storms !

My life is not where I may be :
 Only a part, removed from her.
 We never can be as we were—
 Two lives,— but one : for I am She.

And She and I are one brave whole.
 The soul's two halves for once unite.
 For once : through all the Infinite !
 For once : until the farthest goal.



I-R

POETS

I

POETS !— We are too many. But not one—
 Not one of the whole pack deserves the name.
 This with his fool-bells plays a jingling game ;
 That mildly mouths a most mellifluous moan ;
 A third can fashion heroes without bone ;
 A fourth flings words like firebrands, without aim ;
 A fifth— perhaps a sixth—— How many grand
 Pretentious versifiers, rhymesters, ‘bards’ !
 But none whose venturous eyes dare look towards
 The world’s great future ; never one whose brand
 May sear the actual wrong ; not one to stand
 Upon that height the Unprophetic guards.
 True Poet, with the soul and sword of flame,
 Come forth, and for our soul-less words atone !



POETS

2

TRUE POET !— Back, thou Dreamer ! Lay thy
dreams

In ladies' laps. And silly girls delight
With thy inane apostrophes to Night,
Moonshine, and Wave, and Cloud ! Thy fancy teems ;
Not genius. Else some high heroic themes
Should from thy brain proceed, as Wisdom's Might
From head of Zeus. For now great Wrong and Right
Affront each other, and War's trumpet screams,
Giddyng the earth with dissonance. O where
Is He voiced god-like, unto those who dare
To give more daring with the earnest shout
Of a true battle-hymn ? We fight without
The music which should cheer us in our fight,—
While 'poets' learn to pipe like whiffling streams.



THE POET-PROPHET

THE POET is the Prophet. His the task
 To herald Truth yet far from common sight,
 The germs of the world's work to bring to light,
 To lift the resurrection-hope from hell.
 Song is a Gospel. Whoso doth but bask
 In poet-glory, who thrusts not the might
 Of Wisdom's spear before the ages' fight,
 Is not *the* Poet— sing he ne'er so well.

The Poet is the Prophet. Would'st thou clip
 Isaiah's wings, and mew him in a cage—
 A singing bird— my Lady Lazy's page—
 To soothe dull ears with some luxurious rhyme ?
 He stands before God's altar ; his grand lip
 Hath kiss'd the living coal ; the prophet-rage
 Burneth his heart— and on our darken'd age
 Bursts forth, a lava flood of hopes sublime.

The poet is the seër, and sayer too :
 Prophet and soothsayer of all mankind.

What though—like the Song-Titan, Homer—blind,
And with no conscience of the future growth,
He sings of Troy the Past? Yet Troy the New
Comes on the echo. Is the tempest-wind
Fraught but with battle-shouts? Some tones thou'lt
find
Of music yet unknown : past, future,— both.

The Praiser of Admetus' noble Wife
True marriage prophesied : an argument
As close as Milton's, when that seër went
From Freedom's temple down unto his home ;
Not less a poet then than by the strife
Angelic standing when high heaven was rent.
He, who best sang of God and Man's Descent,
Sang also of the Paradise to come.

And He who wears the Constellated Crown—
As king of human minds— within the rim
Of his wide realm may see a Brighter dim
The starry point of each haught pyramid.
Brightest the Star whose beams are farthest thrown,
Whereby the storm-confused his sails may trim.
Higher than Hamlet the Promethean Hymn
Of the far future Shelley hath unhid.

The Poet *is* the Prophet : nothing less.
 'Tis he who, lark-like, biddeth Toil aspire ;
 Or through our wilderness, a pillar'd fire,
 Goeth before us. Though he seem a cloud,
 In this broad glare of little-knowingness,
 Ere night our Best shall follow and admire.
 The Pole-star of Man's Life is in the Lyre.
 Stoop not, O Poet ! from thy causeway proud.

THE POET'S MISSION

'Is but prophetic vision :
 'To him the daring heart is granted—
 'Not the hand.'

Herwegh.

LEARN higher apprehending
 Of the Poet's task !
 To him are God and Nature lending
 Ore of mighty thought,
 That for such use as the world's need may ask
 Fit iron may be wrought.

The passionate impulse furnaced
 In the Poet's heart

Must weld stern word and action earnest :
 Poet word and deed
In harmony : that he may take God's part,
 And earn a true life's meed.

Clear vision ever lendeth
 Faith to his life :
Then only he his mission comprehendeth
 When he can wield his soul
Or to creative thought or daily strife,
 With artist-like controul.

Not in the purer heaven
 Of his own thought
To dwell, enparadised, to him was given
 The poet-fire :
But that a grander, truer life be wrought,—
 The world exempl'd higher.

Not only do God's Angels
 Behold him with clear eyes :
But day and night they speed his dread evangel
 Over the world,—
Their seraph-wings of act and sacrifice
 Eternally unfurl'd.

LABOUR IN VAIN

O NOT 'in vain'! Even poor rotting weeds
 Nourish the roots of fruitfullest fair trees :
 So from thy fortune-loathéd hope proceeds
 The experience that shall base high victories.
 The tree of the good and evil knowledge needs
 A rooting place in thoughtful agonies.
 Failures of lofty essays are the seeds
 Out of whose dryness, when cold night dissolves
 Into the dawning Spring, fertilities
 Of healthiest promise leap rejoicingly.
 Therefore hold on thy way, all undismay'd
 At the bent brows of Fate, untiringly !
 Knowing this— past all the woe our earth involves
 Sooner or later Truth must be obey'd.



PRINCIPLE AND OPINION

PRINCIPLE and Opinion. Of the last
 I deem but lightly : 'tis a thing of change ;
 Holds not the earnest man, or holds not fast ;
 But which he holds, subjected to the range
 Of thought and time and chance. A man can yield
 Opinion, hide it, quit it, or defer.
 Not so with Principle : he anchors there ;
 It is his lever ; it hath power to wield
 His life, to make him ever minister
 To its behests ; it is his soul, his life ;
 And whether it shall bring him peace or strife
 Is wide o' the mark ; it is his sword, his shield,
 His dominant chord. They are thus different :
 That Principle is fate, Opinion accident.



THOUGHT AND DEED

GOD thought of his creation and 'twas done :
For in God's nature thought, will, deed, are one.
And he approacheth unto God most near
Whose thoughts in acts their true responses hear.
Action is natural echo of true will.
Thought is the seed, and will the secret growth
Till act bursts into daylight. Will's an oath
To accomplish thought,— to elaborate, fulfil,
And realize the idea in visible life.
Thought is a prophecy. He puts the knife
To his own growth whose being ends in thought,
Whose thought hath but the stunted growth of words.
'Tis as if warriors, having forged their swords,
Should dream the fight was won, that *forged was fought.*



WORD AND DEED

(*To Joseph Mazzini*)

I SAID— Whose life is but of thought and word
 He is as one who having forged his sword
 Sleeps dreaming victory won : for I was wroth,
 Seeing how thought and action are divorced
 In these dull times, stern principle enforced
 To hide in the closet. I should be most loath
 To speak or think irreverently of those—
 The Lords of Thought, whose words are warrior-blows
 In the world-conflict. Yet of them the best
 Not only spoke, but did ; as faith had need
 Of utterance poured forth true word or deed.
 Witness our Milton, his great heart express'd
 In his daily life ! and witness thou, my Friend !
 Whose aim steps firmly on to the same heroic end.



JUNE — 1849

FOR ROME ! for Italy !— Our thoughts, our words
 Rush forth impetuously. Would they might be
 Swift-wing'd as angels, with eternal swords
 To smite 'God's Unforgiven.' O to see
 Our new Camillus scourge those slaves of Gaul
 Home to their infamy ! Ye ruins grand
 Of the time-reverenced Coliseum ! fall,
 And with Saint Peter's and the Vatican
 Be one wide undistinguishable heap
 Ere over Rome the Accurséd dare to creep.
 Freemen of Rome ! your ancient heroes man
 The eternal ramparts. Lo, thy martyr band,
 Ruffini ! leads us.— Build yon batter'd wall
 With living men !— O Roman Victory !

(December — 1864)

JUNE — 1849

FOR ROME! for Italy!— ay! for the world:
 It is one quarrel. True Republican!
 Where'er thy banner'd faith may be unfurl'd
 There be thy heart. Thy cause is that of Man,
 The cause of the People; and where'er upheld
 (Amid Carpathian wilds, or on the steeps
 Of Caucasus, above the pride of Eld
 Over the Vatican, or midst the heaps
 Of England's shameful traffic), thou dost well
 To throw thy spirit into danger's van.
 For Rome! for Rome! O that our swords were there.
 Thou Land of Brutus and of Raffaele
 And of Mazzini! how could we despair
 Of Thee, the Holy and Invincible?

(*Ora e sempre*)

OUR COUNTRY

LET us serve our Country !
Whether times be good,
Or disaster whelm her


Like a winter flood.

Let us serve our Country :
Give her life or death ;
Give her every action,
Hope, and breath !

Let us serve our Country !
Where our Fathers' dust
Makes each acre holy,
Every field a trust.

Let us serve our Country !
Where our homesteads are ;
Lift her fame to heaven,—
Worth's own star.

Let us serve our Country !
That belovéd land,



Bride-like, proudly beauteous,
Wonderfully grand.
Let us serve her gladly,
Serve her even to death,
Worship her with action,
Hope, and breath !

BE THYSELF

ENGLAND ! be thyself again :
Lift thy life before the world,
Like a royal flag unfurl'd
High above the tented plain.

England ! be thyself again :
Think of thy old hero deeds ;
They were promises and seeds,—
Were they pledged and sown in vain ?

Raise thy spirit from the mire :
Peace and plenteous bread are good ;
But true Honour needeth food,
Peace owns Righteousness her sire.


Ne'er so plenteously fed,
Duty to the world remains :
Shalt thou only count thy gains
While the lands in chains are led ?

Doth the clank of prisoners' bonds
Hurt no more the English ear ?
Is it England knoweth fear ?
Cromwell's England that desponds ?

Careless of the Captive's moan,
Fearful of Oppression's strength,
Doubting if our sword have length,
If the quarrel is our own ?—

England ! be again thyself.
Brave forbearance may be wise :
This poor craft of Cowardice
Cowering in the hole of Pelf

Saveth neither pence nor toil,
Gaineth but a shameful hour,
Wherein Wrong takes breath of power
And so tighteneth the coil.



England ! be thyself again :

Ask not what may serve the time ;

See where standeth Truth sublime,

Ask her will, and be thou fain.

If her bidding must be war,

Gird thy sword upon thy thigh ;

Shout to the heavens thy battle-cry ;

Let thy voice be heard afar,

Heralding the sunny gleam

Of thy swift and steady blade,

Leaping through the realms dismay'd,

As the daylight cleaves a dream.



1854

TELL the Tzar of England's glories,
Let him learn the deeds of yore !
Tell him how we fought at Florez,
How we won at Azincour !
Tell him of the great Armada
Wreck'd upon our English shore !

Say, for all our peaceful bearing,
England yet hath noble blood ;
Dwarf'd we may be, yet our daring
Mocks his height in field or flood :
We have men whose hearts are higher
Than the ebb of Cheapside mud.

Tell him Thor's unerring hammer
Fitteth yet an English hand ;
Say, at our first battle-clamour
Arthur comes from fairy-land ;
Alfred fronteth the invader,
Drake hath his far-reaching brand.

Mind him of our Portland glory,
Of the Nile and Trafalgar ;
Say, such is the unfinish'd story
Of the Book of English War ;
Copenhagen unto Cronstadt,
Tell him, is not overfar.

Tell him, our unwaning glories
Ruin's self could never dim,
Though all England lay at Florez,
Though all Europe bay'd with him :
He might then beware his triumph,—
Grenville's look is very grim.



HEART AND WILL

OUR England's heart is sound as oak ;
 Our English will is firm ;
 And through our actions Freedom spoke,
 In History's proudest term :
 When Blake was lord from shore to shore,
 And Cromwell ruled the land,
 And Milton's words were shields of power
 To stay the oppressor's hand.

Our England's heart is yet as sound,
 As firm our English will ;
 And tyrants, be they cowl'd or crown'd,
 Shall find us fearless still.
 And though our Vane be in his tomb,
 Though Hampden's blood is cold,
 Their spirits live to lead our doom
 As in the days of old.

Our England's heart is stout as oak ;
 Our English will as brave

As when indignant Freedom spoke
From Eliot's prison grave.
And closing yet again with Wrong,
A world in arms shall see
Our England foremost of the Strong
And first among the Free.

A NATIONAL HYMN

O GOD ! our England save.
God ! who o'er land and wave
Didst lead our sires—
Lead us, through glorious deeds,
Wherever Truth proceeds,
And crown each day with meeds
Of high desires.

O God ! who rulést right—
O God ! whose word is might—
That word fulfil :
Teach us to do and dare,
Make England's life a prayer,
Her hope a zealous care
To work thy will.

Let our Republic stand
Ever at Fame's right hand,
 Stalwart and free :
Give us heroic health :
So we, despising stealth,
May make our Commonwealth
 Worthy of thee.

O Truth ! our England bless :
So we through every stress
 Shall proudly march :
Gird thou our sheathless sword ;
Speak thou our charging word ;
Welcome the battle's lord
 Under thy arch.

Honour ! be thou our guide :
Lead thou our holy pride
 Over the earth :
Till all the nations be,
Even as England, free ;
Till the last tyrant flee
 Before our worth.



PRAYER FOR ENGLAND

(*Sicilian Mariners' Hymn*)

POWER that mouldest
Virtue's boldest !
Make our England choicest earth :
Give us daring,
With true caring
Both for freedom and for worth.

A PRAYER FOR TRUTH

O GOD ! the Giver of all which men call good
Or ill, the Origin and Soul of Power !
I pray to Thee as all must in their hour
Of need, for solace, medicine, or food,
Whether aloud, or secretly— understood
No less by Thee. I pray : but not for fame,
Nor love's best happiness, nor place, nor wealth.
I ask Thee only for that spiritual health
Which is perception of the True— the same
As in Thy Nature : so to know, and aim
Tow'rd Thee my thought, my word, my whole of **life**.
Then matters little whether care, or strife,
Hot sun, or cloud, o'erpass this earthly day :
Night cometh, and my star climbeth Thy **Heaven-way**.



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LEEDS



